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# COLLECTED WORKS OF V. I. LENIN

# V. I. LENIN COLLECTED WORKS

Volume XXIII
1918-1919

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# Edited by ALEXANDER TRACHTENBERG

### EDITOR'S FOREWORD

Prior to the publication of the present volume, International Publishers issued among other volumes of the Collected Works of V. I. Lenin four volumes (XVIII-XXI) which covered three years of the First World War and the two Russian Revolutions of 1917. Volume XXIII continues this publishing program (omitting only the preceding volume containing his writings from November 1917 to May 1918) and includes Lenin's writings and speeches from the spring of 1918 to the spring of 1919—a critical year following the establishment of the Soviet Republic.

Consolidation of Soviet power in the cities and on the land was the central problem of the year covered by this volume. Taking advantage of the "respite" made possible by the German "robber peace" dictated at Brest-Litvosk, the Soviet government was feverishly engaged in extending and deepening the socialist revolution throughout the country, organising local administrations, drawing in representative elements of workers, peasants, and demobilised soldiers, based upon democratic principles and free from bureaucratic and other evil practices of the old regime. Lenin's writings during this period are replete with discussions of the role of local Soviets in the organisation of the popular masses for the defence of the young republic against the gathering counter-revolution within and without, and for the struggle against the famine which was enveloping the cities and threatening the attempt at reviving the country's national economy.

Notwithstanding his duties as head of the government and of the state defence committee, Lenin found time during this year to deliver extended reports at conferences of government functionaries and representative gatherings of Communist, trade union and peasant organisations and professional groups to explain the policies which the government was pursuing with regard to national and international problems.

He spoke to Moscow citizens assembled in their various neighbour-hoods and at workers' meetings held in their factories.

At one of these meetings an attempt was made on Lenin's life by a member of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party. During this period this party was the spearhead of counter-revolutionary uprisings in various parts of the country and was sowing the seeds of disaffection and confusion, especially among the peasants. The Socialist-Revolutionaries organised the assassination of the German ambassador to give Germany the pretext for renewing its war on the Soviet Republic at the time when it was beset by internal difficulties and threatened by military invasion of other powers. Many of Lenin's speeches and writings contained in this volume were addressed to this problem and contributed greatly to the ideological and political defeat of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and similar groupings which were working against the unity of the popular masses.

Lenin wrote letters answering inquiries from workers' and peasants' groups in various parts of the country. He contributed articles to the press on the issues of the day as well as on theoretical problems of Marxism growing out of the economic and political measures undertaken by the Soviet government.

The larger writings in this volume—Lenin's withering critique of Karl Kautsky and his famous "Letter to American Workers"—as well as the reports, speeches, newspaper articles, letters, etc., have been arranged strictly chronologically where exact dates were available; otherwise they were included at the end of the month in which they were written. Some of Lenin's speeches were not recorded stenographically, hence only short newspaper accounts of them could be included.

Lenin's articles carry his own titles. Whenever his reports and speeches deal with a single theme, they are so titled by the editor. However, many of the reports and speeches made at intervals during this period had to cover a series of problems arising out of the changing national and international situations. Only general descriptive titles could be given by the editor to these utterances.

January, 1945.

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# Articles and Speeches from May 1918 to November 1918

# THE SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY

COMRADES, if you will allow me, I shall acquaint you with the present state of foreign affairs.<sup>1</sup>

During these past few days our international position has in many respects become more complicated owing to the growing acuteness of the general situation. With this growing acuteness, provocation—the deliberate sowing of panic by the bourgeois press and its satellite, the socialist press—is again doing its sinister and sordid work of trying to restore Kornilovism. \*

I would like first of all to draw your attention to the question of what at bottom determines the international position of the Soviet Republic, in order then to examine the outward or legal forms determining that position. On that basis may be outlined the new difficulties that have arisen, or, rather, we can indicate the turning point which we have now reached and which is the cause of the growing acuteness of the political situation.

You know—and the experience of two Russian revolutions has forcefully confirmed that knowledge—that the most profound roots of both the home and foreign policy of our state are determined by the economic interests, the economic position of the ruling classes of our state. This precept, which is the basis of the entire Marxist outlook, and which for us, Russian revolutionaries, has been confirmed by the great experience of the two Russian revolutions, must not be overlooked for a moment if we are not to lose our way in the maze and labyrinth of diplomatic subtleties—a labyrinth which is sometimes artificially created and complicated by people, classes, parties, and groups that love, or are compelled, to fish in troubled waters.

The present moment is one in which, in spite of the international

<sup>\*</sup> From General L. G. Kornilov, Commander-in-Chief of the army during the Kerensky regime in 1917, who organized a revolt to restore the monarchy.—Ed.

situation that has arisen, our counter-revolutionaries—the Cadets, \* the bourgeoisie and the landlords, and their principal henchmen, the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks—are also endeavouring to fish in troubled waters.

In its main features, the position amounts to this, that the Socialist Soviet Republic of Russia, for economic and political reasons of which you are aware and which we have many times described in the press, and owing to a different rate of development and a different soil for that development from that which exists in the West-our Socialist Soviet Republic remains for the time being an island in the midst of a raging sea of imperialist depredation. And the fundamental economic factor in the West is that this imperialist war, which has so harassed and tormented mankind, has given rise to such involved, such acute and tangled conflicts that time and again, at every step, situations arise when the decision of war or peace, the decision in favour of one group or another, hangs by a thread. That is just the kind of situation we have been going through in the past few days. The antagonisms and conflicts, the struggle and the furious clashes between the imperialist powers which grow into a war they are unable by their policy to prevent, owing to the economic conditions of capitalist development over a period of many decades, have resulted in the fact that the imperialists themselves are already powerless to stop this war. That is what has given rise to the fundamental antagonisms and has confused and complicated the situation.

Owing to these contradictions, we find that the general alliance of the imperialists of all countries, based on the capitalist economic alliance, an alliance that is naturally and inevitably for the defence of capital—which knows no fatherland, has shown in many a big and outstanding episode in world history that it sets a higher value on the protection of its alliance of the capitalists of all countries against the working people than on the interests of the fatherland, of the people or of anything else—this alliance is not the motive force of policy.

Of course, it continues to be the basic economic tendency of the capitalist system and in the long run is bound to manifest itself with inevitable force. An exception to this basic tendency of capitalism is the fact that the imperialist powers—which have now divided up the whole world, one might say, completely—have been split by the im-

<sup>•</sup> The popular appellation of the Constitutional-Democratic Party.—Ed.

perialist war into groups, hostile groups, hostile coalitions. This hostility, this conflict, this life and death struggle, shows that with certain reservations an alliance of the imperialists of all countries is here impossible. We are witnessing a situation in which the raging waves of imperialist reaction, of the imperialist slaughter of the nations, are dashing against the small island of the Socialist Soviet Republic and seem ready at any moment to submerge it. Yet time and again we find that these waves break and spend their force against each other.

The fundamental antagonisms between the imperialist powers have led to such a ruthless struggle that even while they realise its hopelessness, neither of the groups is able, of its own will, to tear itself away from the iron clutches of this war. The war has brought out two cardinal antagonisms, and these antagonisms determine the international position of the Socialist Soviet Republic at the present moment. The first is the struggle between Germany and Great Britain on the Western front, which has reached the extreme of ferocity. Time and again have we heard the spokesmen of one or other of these warring camps promising and assuring their own people and other peoples that only one moment more, only one effort more, and the enemy would be crushed, the fatherland saved, and the interests of culture and of the war of liberation safeguarded forever. The longer this unprecedented struggle drags on and the deeper the belligerent parties become involved in it, the farther the end of this interminable war recedes into the distance. It is the bitterness of this struggle that renders so extremely difficult, in fact, practically impossible, an alliance of the big imperialist powers against the Soviet Republic, a country which in the six months or so of its existence has won the warm wishes and undivided sympathies of all class-conscious workers in every country of the world.

The second antagonism determining the international position of Russia is the rivalry between Japan and America. The economic development of these countries has for several decades been piling up mountains of inflammable material which renders inevitable a desperate struggle between these powers for the mastery of the Pacific and the Pacific coast. The entire diplomatic and economic history of the Far East puts it beyond all question that the acute conflict maturing between Japan and America cannot be averted under capitalism. This antagonism, veiled for the time being by the alliance of Japan and America against Germany, is retarding the offensive of Japanese

imperialism against Russia. The hostilities started against the Soviet Republic (the landing of troops in Vladivostok and the support given to Semyonov's bands\*) are being retarded, because they threaten to convert the veiled conflict between Japan and America into open war. Of course, it is quite possible—and we must not forget this—that the groupings of imperialist powers, however durable they seem, may be upset in the space of a few days, if the sacred interests of private property, the sacred right to concessions, and so on, demand it. And even the smallest spark may be enough to blow up the existing grouping of powers, and then the antagonisms I have mentioned will no longer serve us as a defence.

But, today, the situation I have described explains why our socialist island can go on existing amidst the raging storms; and at the same time it explains why this situation is so unstable that at times it seems, to the great delight of the bourgeoisie and the panic of the petty bourgeoisie, as if the waves will sweep over it at any moment.

The outer integument, the outward expression of this situation is the Peace of Brest-Litovsk, † on the one hand, and the customs and laws relating to neutral countries, on the other.

You know what treaties and laws are worth when an international conflict flares up. They are nothing but scraps of paper.

It is customary to cite and recall these words as a specimen of the cynicism of imperialist foreign policy. But the cynicism lies not so much in these words as in the ruthless, brutally and painfully ruthless, imperialist war, in which international treaties and all laws relating to neutrality have been, are, and will be trampled under foot as long as capitalism lasts.

That is why, when we approach what is the prime question for us—the question of the Brest-Litovsk Peace, of the possibility of scrapping it, and of the consequences that would follow for us from such a state of affairs—if we want to stand firmly on our socialist feet and not allow ourselves to be overthrown by the machinations and provocations of the counter-revolutionaries, whatever socialist labels they may use to disguise themselves, we must never for a moment forget the economic basis of all peace treaties, the treaty of

<sup>\*</sup> Cossack general, G. Semyonov, leader of counter-revolutionary bands operating in the Far Eastern territory.—Ed.

<sup>†</sup> Peace treaty between Soviet Russia and Germany, concluded in February, 1918.-Ed.

Brest-Litovsk included, the economic basis of all neutrality, ours included. We must not forget, on the one hand, the state of affairs of international imperialism on a world scale in relation to that class which is growing and which is going to be the successor of capitalism, which sooner or later—even if later than we would like and expect—is bound to be the successor of capitalism and will vanquish capitalism all over the world. And, on the other hand, we must not forget the relations of the imperialist countries, of the imperialist economic groups, among themselves.

If we clearly realise this situation we shall have no difficulty, I think, in understanding the significance of those particular diplomatic issues, those details, sometimes even trifles, which have been riveting our attention and occupying our minds most of all these past few days. Naturally, the instability of the international situation has given rise to panic. That panic has been started by the Cadets, the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, who support the interests of those who want panic and are striving to sow it. And so, I say, if we have clearly grasped our situation and do not close our eyes to its danger and tragedy, and then analyse our economic position, we shall say: Yes, economic antagonisms were bound to complicate matters so that sooner or later the question of war or peace will become imminent.

There are two tendencies: one makes inevitable an alliance of all the imperialists; the other pits one set of imperialists against another. And neither of these tendencies has any firm ground under it. Yes, it is true that just now Japan cannot make up her mind to go the whole hog in attacking us, although with her million-strong army, she could overpower Russia, which is notoriously weak. When that will be—neither I nor anybody else can say.

The form of an ultimatum would hold out the threat of war with the Allied nations and a treaty with Germany; but all this may change in a few days. It may change at any moment, because the American bourgeoisie, which is now at odds with Japan, may tomorrow reach an understanding with her; or the Japanese bourgeoisie may tomorrow reach an understanding with the German bourgeoisie. There are fundamental interests they have in common, the interests of dividing up the world, the interests of the landlords and of capital; the maintenance of their national prestige and their national interests, as they call it. This language is familiar enough to those who have

the misfortune or the habit—which is it?—of reading Socialist-Revolutionary and similar newspapers. And when they so often harp on their national prestige, we all know perfectly well, after the experience of 1914, what imperialist robbery is concealed behind those words. In the light of these relations, it should be clear why the situation in the Far East is so precarious. There is one thing we must say, and that is that we must have these antagonisms of capitalist interests clearly in mind, and must know that the stability of the Soviet Republic is arousing growing sympathy among vast masses of working people, among the toiling and exploited populations of all countries.

On the one hand, we have the facts of German political life. The majority of the German imperialist classes, parties, and groups are in favour of observing the Brest-Litovsk Peace, but would naturally be very glad if they could improve on it and secure a few more annexations at the expense of Russia. What induces them to adopt this attitude is the political and military considerations, looked at from the standpoint of German national interests—as they call them—in other words, imperialist interests. This makes them prefer peace in the East so as to leave their hands free in the West, where the German imperialists have many times already promised immediate victory, and where every week and every month shows that the more minor victories they gain, the more this victory recedes into the remote distance. On the other hand, we have the war party, which time and again made its influence felt in the Brest-Litovsk negotiations, and whose counterpart naturally exists in all the imperialist countries. This war party says that force must be resorted to at once, regardless of the consequences. That is the voice of the extreme war party; it has been well known in the history of Germany ever since her dizzying military victories began; it has been known ever since 1866, for example, when the extreme war party in Germany defeated Austria, and then put her completely to rout. All these clashes and conflicts are inevitable, and the effect of them is that just now, as far as this is concerned, everything hangs by a thread, and that while, on the one hand, the bourgeois imperialist majority in the German parliament, the German propertied classes, the German capitalists, prefer to abide by the Brest-Litovsk Treaty-although, of course, I repeat, they have no objection to improving on it—on the other hand, we must expect and be prepared, any day, any minute, for a change of policy in the interests of the extreme war party.

This will make it clear why the international situation is so unstable, why it is so easy for one or another situation to arise for the party, and how cautious, circumspect, controlled, and cool-headed the Soviet government must be if it is to define its task clearly. Let the Russian bourgeoisie swerve between the French and the German orientation—let them! They like it. They have seen in several places what an excellent guarantee German support offers them against the muzhik who is taking the land and the worker who is laying the foundations of socialism. Only yesterday they were dubbing, as they have been for years, those who condemned the imperialist war and told the truth about its traitors to the country; but now, in the space of a few weeks, they are all ready to change their political faith and to abandon their alliance with the British pirates for an alliance with the German pirates against the Soviet state. Let the bourgeois of all shades-from the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks to the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries-swing from one side to the other. That is all you can expect of them. Let them sow panic, being in a state of panic themselves. Let them dash hither and thither, knowing no other way and swinging from one orientation to another, from one absurd phrase to another, incapable of understanding that when revolution attains big proportions, we have, in order to lend it greater depth, to experience the most varied groupings and transitions from one stage to another. We Russian revolutionaries have been fortunate enough in the course of this twentieth century to have had the experience of two revolutions, each of which has given us immense experience—experience which has left its imprint on the very life of the people-of how a revolutionary movement, if it is a deep and serious one, is built; how the various classes manifest themselves in that movement; and how-sometimes by a long process of evolution, in a difficult and painful way—new classes ripen and mature.

Remember what it cost the Soviets, created by an elemental upsurge in 1905, to get into action again in 1917, and after that, when they had to endure all the torments of compromise with the bourgeoisie and with the covert, most vicious enemies of the working class, who talked of defending the revolution and of the red flag, yet committed the most heinous of crimes in June 1917. Now that we have the backing of the majority of the working class, remember what it cost us, after the great Revolution of 1905, to establish the Soviets of the working and peasant classes. Remember this and reflect on the huge

scale on which the struggle against international imperialism is developing; reflect how difficult it has been to reach this state of things, and what the Russian republic had to undergo when it came forward in advance of all the other detachments of the socialist army.

I know, of course, that there are wiseacres who consider themselves very clever and even call themselves Socialists and who assure us that we should not have taken power until the revolution had broken out in all countries. They do not suspect that in talking like that they are forsaking the revolution and deserting to the bourgeoisie. To wait until the labouring classes make a revolution on a world scale means all of us waiting in a state of petrified suspension. That is nonsense. The difficulties of revolution are familiar to everybody. Having begun with brilliant success in one country, it may have to pass through painful periods; for final victory is possible only on a world scale, and only as a result of the joint efforts of the workers of all countries. Our task is one of perseverance and caution; we must manœuvre and if necessary retreat, until we obtain reinforcements. The adoption of these tactics is inevitable, however much they may be sneered at by people who call themselves revolutionaries but have no inkling of what a revolution means.

With that I will conclude my general remarks and go on to deal with what has, in these past few days, given rise to alarm and panic and enabled the counter-revolutionaries to resume their subversive work against the Soviet regime.

I have already said that the outer legal form and integument of all the foreign relations of the Soviet Socialist Republic is, on the one hand, the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, and, on the other, the general laws and usages defining the position of a neutral country surrounded by warring countries; that it was this state of affairs that gave rise to the difficulties we have lately been experiencing. It followed naturally from the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk that we should conclude final peace with Finland, the Ukraine, and Turkey; yet we continue in a state of war with each of these countries, and this, not as a consequence of the internal development of the country, but of the influence of the ruling classes of those countries. That being the case, the only temporary way out lay in the temporary respite we had secured by concluding the Brest-Litovsk Peace. That was the respite, about the impossibility of which there was so much foolish and unnecessary talk; but it turned out to be quite possible, and we have been enjoying

its fruits for two months. Its effects have been felt by the majority of the Russian soldiers, it has enabled them to return home and see what was happening there, to benefit by the achievements of the revolution, to make use of the land, to look around them and gather fresh strength for the new sacrifices that confront them.

Naturally, this temporary respite seemed to be coming to an end when the situation began to grow acute in Finland, in the Ukraine, and in Turkey—when we found that, instead of final peace, all we had secured was a postponement of that acute economic question: war or peace? Are we now to go to war again, notwithstanding the peaceful intentions of the Soviet government and our firm determination to sacrifice our so-called Great Power status—that is, the right to conclude secret treaties, to conceal them from the people with the help of gentry like Chernov, Tsereteli and Kerensky, \* to conclude secret predatory treaties and to wage a predatory imperialist war? After all, instead of final peace, all we have obtained is a brief post-ponement of that acute question of war or peace.

That is the focal point of the whole problem; and again you will clearly see what its final solution will depend on. It will depend on the outcome of the fluctuations between the two hostile groups of imperialist countries—on the American conflict in the Far East and on the Anglo-German conflict in Western Europe. It is natural that these antagonisms should have grown more acute with the conquest of the Ukraine, as a result of a situation which the German imperialists, especially the chief war party, often pictured in so rosy a light, so airily, but which has caused such incredible difficulties to this very extreme war party of Germany; this situation, which has for the time being lent wing to the hopes of the Russian Cadets, Mensheviks and Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, who are fired with admiration for what Skoropadsky † is doing in the Ukraine and with hope that the same thing can now easily be done in Russia. These gentry will find they are making a mistake; their hopes will be scattered to the winds, because, as I say, even this chief war party in Germany, which is so used to relying on the sword, this time found that it had lost support of the majority of the imperialists of the bourgeois imperialist circles, when the latter saw the unparalleled difficulties that were entailed in con-

<sup>\*</sup> Russian Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries.—Ed.

<sup>†</sup> Cossack general and large land owner, head of the Ukrainian counter-revolutionary government during German occupation.—Ed.

quering the Ukraine, in subjugating a whole nation, and in the enforced necessity of resorting to a terrible coup d'état.

What unparalleled difficulties confronted this chief war party, this extreme war party in Germany when, having promised its people and the workers a supreme victory on the Western front, it found itself faced with new and incredible economic and political difficulties, the diversion of military forces for tasks which at first also seemed easy, and with a treaty with the Ukrainian Mensheviks and Right Socialist-Revolutionaries who had signed the peace treaty.

The extreme war party in Germany imagined that it would move large bodies of troops and secure grain; but then it found that it would have to effect a coup d'état. These proved to be easy, because the Ukrainian Mensheviks readily acquiesced. But then it turned out that the coup d'état was creating new and gigantic difficulties, because it was necessary to fight every inch of the way to secure grain and raw material, without which Germany could not exist, but which is costing too much effort and sacrifice to secure by military force in an occupied country.

That is the situation as it exists in the Ukraine, and it was bound to lend wing to the hopes of the Russian counter-revolutionaries. Naturally, being unable to restore her army, Russia has suffered and is still suffering new losses in this struggle. The peace negotiations, too, have led to new and onerous terms, to new indemnities, in open and concealed form. By what edict they want to fix the frontiers of the Ukraine still remains unclear. The Rada, which signed the edict, has been deposed. A landlord Hetman has been restored in its place. And this uncertainty of the situation has given rise to a number of problems which show that the question of war and peace remains just where it was before. The partial truces between the Russian and German troops decide nothing in so far as the general situation is concerned. The whole question is still in the air. The same applies to Georgia, where a long counter-revolutionary struggle of the Caucasian Menshevik government has been going on, a long struggle of counterrevolutionaries who style themselves Social-Democrats.

And now that the victory of the Soviet regime and the working masses, having embraced the whole of Russia, has begun to spread to the non-Russian border regions, now that it has become clear beyond a doubt—as the counter-revolutionary representatives of the Don Cossacks have admitted—that the victory of the Soviet regime

cannot be checked, now that the Menshevik government in the Caucasus has begun to waver—Gegechkori and Jordania having belatedly come to their senses and begun to talk about the advisability of finding a common language with the Bolsheviks—now that Tsereteli, with the help of Turkish troops, has taken the field against the Bolsheviks, they will reap what the Rada reaped.

But you must bear in mind that if these politicians of the Caucasian Rada receive the support of German troops as did the Ukrainian Rada, it is obvious that this will cause new difficulties, the inevitability of a new war, new danger and new uncertainty for the Russian Soviet Republic. There are people who say that this uncertainty, the anguish of this uncertain situation—and, to be sure, this kind of uncertainty can be worse than any certainty—can be easily eliminated, that all that is required is to insist that the Germans observe the Brest-Litovsk Treaty.

I have had occasion to hear such talk from naive people who think they are Lefts, but who are in reality only reflecting the narrowness of our petty bourgeoisie....\*

They forget that you must be victorious before you can insist. If you are not victorious, the enemy can keep deferring its reply to your demands, or not reply at all.

Such is the law of imperialist war. You do not like it? Well, then, you must be able to defend your fatherland. The worker has the right to defend his fatherland, when it is for socialism, for the working class.

I just want to add that this uncertainty on the Caucasian border is due to the absolutely unpardonable vacillations of the Gegechkori government, which first declared that it would not recognise the Brest-Litovsk Peace, and then proclaimed its independence, without informing us as to the territory over which this extends. We sent numerous radiograms requesting them to be good enough to state what territory they were laying claim to. You have a perfect right to claim your independence, we said, but if you do it is your duty to say what territory you represent. That was a week ago. We have sent a host of radiograms, but have not received a single reply. The German imperialists are taking advantage of this. It has enabled Germany and Turkey as a vassal state, to keep on advancing, not being responsible or paying heed to anything, merely declaring: We

<sup>•</sup> Several lines in the stenogram undecipherable.—Ed.

will seize all we can; we are not violating the Brest-Litovsk Peace, for the Transcaucasian army does not recognise it and the Caucasus is independent.

Of whom is the Gegechkori government independent? It is independent of the Soviet Republic, but it is a wee bit dependent, you know, on the German imperialists; and that is only natural.

Such is the situation, such are the extremely acute relations that have arisen in the past few days; and this situation has only furnished us with new and pretty conclusive confirmation of the correctness of the tactics which the overwhelming majority of our party, the Russian Bolshevik Communist Party, has been pursuing, and which it has been firmly insisting upon during the past few months.

We now have wide experience in revolution, and this experience has taught us that we must employ tactics of relentless assault when the objective conditions permit it, when experience of compromise has shown that the masses are indignant and that an assault will be an expression of this change of mind. But we have to resort to waiting tactics, to a slow mustering of forces, when the objective conditions make it impossible to call for a general and ruthless counter-assault.

He who does not close his eyes to the facts, he who is not blind, will know that we are now only repeating what we have said before, what we have always said—that we do not lose sight of the weakness of the Russian working class as compared with other detachments of the international proletariat. It is not through any wish of ours, but owing to historical circumstances, to the heritage of the tsarist regime and the feebleness of the Russian bourgeoisie that this detachment finds itself in advance of other detachments of the international proletariat—not because we wanted it, but because circumstances demanded it. But we must remain at our post until our ally, the international proletariat, comes to our aid; and come to our aid it inevitably will, although so far it is doing it more slowly than we expected and would wish. Although we see that this proletariat is moving too slowly, owing to objective circumstances, we must nevertheless stick to our tactics of waiting and taking advantage of the conflicts and antagonisms among the imperialists, and of slowly accumulating strength—the tactics of maintaining the island of Soviet power intact amidst the raging sea of imperialism, of maintaining intact that island to which the eyes of the working people of all

countries are even now turned. That is why we say that if the extreme war party may at any minute defeat any imperialist coalition and create a new and unexpected imperialist coalition against us, we, at least, will do nothing to facilitate it. If they attack us-yes, we are defencists now-we will do everything in our power, everything diplomatic tactics are capable of. We will do everything to defer that moment, everything to protract the brief and fragile respite we obtained in March; for we are firmly convinced that we have the backing of tens of millions of workers and peasants who know that with every week, let alone every month, of this respite they are gathering new strength; they are consolidating the Soviet regime and making it strong and invulnerable; they are infusing a new spirit; and, after the exhaustion and fatigue of a devastating reactionary war, they will create a state of determination and readiness to launch into the last, decisive fight when external forces hurl themselves upon the Socialist Soviet Republic.

Since October 25 [November 7] 1917, we have been defencists; we have won the right to defend the fatherland. It is not secret treaties we are defending—we have annulled them and exposed them in the eyes of the world. We are defending the fatherland from the imperialists. We are defending it, and we shall win. It is not a state we stand for, it is not a great power we are defending—nothing remains of all-the-Russias except Great Russia. It is not national interests we are upholding—we claim that the interests of socialism, the interests of world socialism, rank higher than national interests, higher than the interests of the state. We are defenders of the socialist fatherland.

This will not be done by a declaration; it can be done only by the overthrow of the bourgeoisie in the country, by a ruthless life and death struggle begun there—and we know that we shall win. This is a little island amidst an imperialist world of war; but on this island we have demonstrated and proved what the working class is capable of. Everybody knows it and admits it. We have proved that we have the right to defend our fatherland. We are defencists, and we regard this defence with all that earnestness which four years of war have taught us, with all that earnestness and caution every worker and peasant understands who has seen soldiers and knows what they have gone through during these four years of war—with that caution which only revolutionaries in word but not in deed can fail to understand, can jeer and sneer at. It is just because we stand for the defence of

the fatherland that we say this defence needs a firm and strong army, a firm rear—and what a firm and strong army needs above all is an efficient food supply. That means that the dictatorship of the proletariat must operate not only through the central government—that is the first step, but only the first step; the dictatorship must operate all over Russia—that is the second step, and only the second step, and even that we have not yet taken as fully as we should. What is needed, what is essential, is proletarian discipline, a real proletarian dictatorship, under which the firm and iron power of the class-conscious workers will make itself felt even in the most remote corners of our country. And not a single kulak, not a single rich man and enemy of the state grain monopoly will go unpunished, but will be ferreted out and brought to account by the avenging hand of the disciplined working class rulers, the proletarian rulers.

And we say that in the matter of the defence of the fatherland we exercise caution: everything that our diplomacy can do to defer the moment of war, to prolong the respite, must be done. We promise the workers and peasants to do our utmost for peace, and we shall do it. And as to the bourgeois gentry and their followers, who think that new Skoropadskys can be hatched here, as in the Ukraine—where a coup d'état was so easy—let them not forget that if it cost the German war party so much trouble to effect a coup d'état in the Ukraine, they will meet with plenty of resistance in Soviet Russia. Yes, everything goes to prove that; this was the line pursued by the Soviet government, which made every sacrifice to consolidate the position of the toiling masses in the country.

The position as regards peace, as regards Finland, can be summed up in the words: Fort Ino and Murman. Fort Ino—the key to the defence of Petrograd—was one of the territorial conditions included in our treaty with the Finnish workers' government. This government definitely held that it was entitled to all this territory, but it made an exception and agreed to the exclusion of Fort Ino, acting—as is stated in the treaty we concluded—in the common interests of the Socialist Republic of Finland and the Socialist Soviet Republic of Russia. It goes without saying that our troops signed this peace treaty in Finland and subscribed to these conditions; that bourgeois and counter-revolutionary Finland was bound to rise up in arms against it. It goes without saying that the reactionary and counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie of Finland laid claim to this fortress; that

over this question relations grew strained time and again, and continue to be strained. Everything hangs by a thread. It goes without saying that relations were even more strained over the question of Murman, to which the British and French laid claim because they had invested tens of millions in building a port to safeguard their rear in their imperialist war with Germany. So perfect is their respect for neutrality that they lay their hands on whatever they can grab, sufficient grounds for grabbing it being that they have their battleships, which we have no means of driving away. It goes without saying that this was bound to aggravate matters. You have the outer integument, the legal formula, created by the international position of the Soviet Republic, which stipulates that the armed forces of any belligerent power cannot set foot on neutral territory without being disarmed. The British landed armed forces in Murman, and we were unable to prevent this by resorting to armed force ourselves. The result is that we have been presented with demands which practically amount to an ultimatum: If you cannot protect your neutrality, we will fight on your territory.

But a workers' and peasants' army has already been formed; in the rural districts, in the provinces it has united the peasants who have returned to their land, now wrested from the landlords—they have something to defend now. It has begun to build up the Soviet power and will be the vanguard if Russia is invaded. We will meet the enemy united to a man.

My time has elapsed, and I will conclude by reading a telegram we have received from Comrade Joffe, the ambassador of the Soviet Republic in Berlin. This telegram from our ambassador will confirm, on the one hand, that the survey of international relations I have given here is correct, and, on the other, that the foreign policy of our Soviet Republic is a policy of earnest preparation for the defence of the fatherland, a restrained policy of not allowing a single step to be taken that may serve the ends of the extremist parties of the imperialist powers in the West and the East. This policy rests on a sound foundation and is free of all illusions. There is always the possibility of our being attacked any day by military force, and we workers and peasants say to ourselves and to the world—and we will prove it—that we will rise up as one man in defence of the Soviet Republic. And I therefore hope that the reading of this telegram will be a fitting conclusion to my speech and will show along what lines

the representatives of the Soviet Republic abroad are working for the welfare of the Soviets, of all Soviet institutions and of the Soviet Republic.

"The latest radio messages received today state that the German War Prisoners' Commission is leaving on Friday, May 10. We are already in possession of a note from the German government suggesting the formation of a special commission to discuss all legal questions affecting our property in the Ukraine and Finland. I have given my assent to the formation of this commission and would request you to send suitable representatives, military and legal. Today I had a conversation on the subject of further advances, the demand for the evacuation of Fort Ino and the status of Russians in Germany. The reply I received was that the German High Command declares that there will be no further advances; Germany's role in the Ukraine and Finland is completed; Germany agrees to assist our peace negotiations with Kiev and Helsingfors and is communicating with the said governments on the subject. On the question of Fort Ino in the peace negotiations with Finland: under the treaty the forts are to be dismantled; Germany considers that our treaty with the Reds may be taken in the establishment of the frontier; the Whites have not yet replied. The German government officially declares that Germany stands firmly by the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, desires to live in peace with us, cherishes no aggressive plans, and will undertake no advance against us. In response to my demand, Germany promises to treat Russian citizens on the same footing as other neutrals."

Report at joint meeting of All-Russian Central Executive Committee and the Moscow Soviet, May 14, 1918.

Published in Report of the Fourth All-Russian Central Executive Committee, 1920.

## THE POSITION OF THE "LEFTS"

LENIN first dealt with the views of the "Lefts" on foreign policy and spoke of the tremendous propaganda value of the Brest-Litovsk negotiations, for they afford the Western proletariat the opportunity of learning a lot, of understanding what the Bolsheviks are, what the situation now in our country after the revolution is, and so on. Salvation today lies not in openly repudiating the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, but in knowing how to manœuvre amidst the complex international situations that have arisen owing to the contradictory interests of the various imperialist countries. We must take into account the relations between Japan and America, between Germany and England, the divergences within the German capitalist and war parties, and soon and so forth.

In our home policy, what is needed is proletarian discipline, a fight against the village kulaks, measures to secure grain, a complete food dictatorship and the dictatorship of the working class in the country.

Replying to the "Lefts" on the subject of state capitalism, Lenin explained that it holds out no terrors for us, inasmuch as our chief concern in the painful period of transition from capitalism to socialism through which we are now passing is to save industry, and only by organising it on a large scale, which is possible today only under state capitalism, can we set industry in working order and keep exact account of what is produced and consumed. An essential condition for this is workers' control. As an example, Lenin cited the leather workers, their strong organisation and their workers' control in private enterprises.

Newspaper account of report at Regional Conference of the Russian Communist Party, May 15, 1918.

Pravda, No. 95, May 17, 1918.

# THE SOVIET FINANCIAL POLICY

LENIN began his speech by stating that the financial position of the country was undoubtedly critical. In the course of the socialist transformation of society, he said, it is necessary to overcome a number of difficulties which often seem insurmountable. But the tasks are such that it is worth taking trouble over them and giving final battle to the bourgeoisie.

You know better than anyone else the difficulties that have to be overcome in passing from general proposals and decrees to everyday life. The work ahead of us will be very difficult because the resistance of the propertied classes will be desperate. But the arduous work confronting us will be more than compensated when we succeed in overcoming the resistance of the bourgeoisie and in subordinating it to the control of the Soviet government. We must not forget that every radical reform we undertake will be doomed to failure unless we achieve success in our financial policy. Success in this field will determine the success of the enormous work we have planned of transforming society on socialist lines.

The fundamental financial tasks which the Soviet government has outlined must be immediately put into practice, and only consultation with you, people with practical experience, can help to make the changes we have planned something more than mere declarations.

We must at all costs achieve lasting financial reforms.

In the name of the Council of People's Commissars I submit for your consideration the tasks which emerged from numerous consultations and discussions, and I would ask you to work them out in detail in order that they may be put into practice. These tasks are as follows:

Financial centralisation. The speaker expressed the opinion that the complete separation of the localities from the centre was quite natural.

He regarded this as the expression of the natural hatred and abhorrence the people felt towards the old system of centralisation that existed under the autocracy. But, by their own experience, the people will come to the conclusion that democratic centralisation is necessary, because without it it will be impossible to carry out the financial reforms which will ensure every citizen bread and a cultured life.

No matter how great the state of dislocation may be, when any local Soviet sets up its own independent republic, we must not give way to despair, for these are merely growing pains, and are quite natural during the transition from tsarist Russia to the Russia of united Soviet organisations.

Introduction of an income and property tax. I would ask you to take up this question as early as possible. You know that all Socialists are opposed to indirect taxation, because the only proper system of taxation from the socialist point of view is a graduated income and property tax. As I have already said, the resistance of the propertied classes will be desperate when this tax is enforced. At present, thanks to their connections and their shady methods, including bribery, they manage to evade taxation, but we must adopt all measures to prevent this.

We have outlined a number of measures in this field, the ground has been cleared for the foundations of the edifice, but the foundations themselves have not yet been laid because some time is required to find the necessary workers for it. The time for this is now approaching. The question of the income tax is such that decrees alone are inadequate for its enforcement; practical measures and experience are required.

We are of the opinion that a monthly system of collecting the income tax must be adopted. With regard to persons in receipt of incomes from the Treasury, all measures must be taken to collect the income tax each month by deducting the tax from their salaries.

The income tax must be collected from everybody without exception, because managing with the aid of the printing press, as we have been doing up to now, can be justified only as a temporary expedient.

This transitional period has now come to an end, and we must introduce a graduated property tax payable at very short intervals. I would ask you to work out this measure in a detailed and practical form, and to draw up definite plans which we could quickly embody in decrees and instructions.

Referring to the question of levies Lenin said: I am not at all opposed to levies, for I understand perfectly well that the proletariat cannot dispense with them in the early period. It is a proper measure for the transitional authorities to impose. But the transitional period has now come to an end and we are about to introduce the centralised collection of a graduated income tax payable at very short intervals. Undoubtedly, the bourgeoisie will exert every effort to evade our laws and will resort to petty fraud. We shall combat this in order completely to undermine the remnants of the bourgeoisie.

Introduction of compulsory labour service and the raising of labour discipline. The old capitalism, based on free trade and competition, has been greatly undermined by the war all over Europe. The war led to the introduction of compulsory labour service for the population in many countries. In actual fact, however, it turned out that compulsory labour service was introduced only for the poor, because the rich could easily get themselves excused. We must introduce compulsory labour service primarily not for the poor, who have brought sufficient sacrifices to the altar of war, but for the rich, who have amassed wealth in the war. It is this measure that we must start with. We must introduce labour budget tax books primarily for the rich in order that we may see what share of work each of them performs for the benefit and salvation of his country. Supervision will be exercised by the local Soviets.

In regard to the poor, this measure is at present quite superfluous, because they have to work hard enough as it is; moreover, the trade unions are adopting every measure to increase productivity and to raise labour discipline.

This measure, I repeat, must be introduced first of all. It will serve as a preparatory measure for transferring the entire burden of taxation to the rich, who in fairness should bear it.

Substitution of a new currency for the present currency. One of the results of the war is an abundance of paper currency in all countries. In the transition to socialism it is necessary to substitute other tokens of claim upon public wealth for the present currency notes. The money, the paper notes—which are now called money—has a corrupting influence and is dangerous because the bourgeoisie, by hoarding stocks of these paper notes, remain in economic power. We must take immediate measures to counteract this.

These measures are the introduction of the strictest registration of

the amount of paper notes in circulation by completely substituting new money for that in circulation at present. Undoubtedly, great economic and political difficulties will be encountered in the introduction of this measure. It calls for careful preparation, but we have already started on these preparations.

We shall fix a very short period within which everyone must declare the amount of money in his possession and receive new money in exchange for it. If the sum is small, he will receive a ruble for a ruble. If the sum exceeds the fixed limit, he will get only a part. Undoubtedly, this measure will meet with strong resistance, not only from the bourgeoisie, but also from our peasants who have become rich as a result of the war and who have buried jars filled with paper money in the ground. We shall come face to face with the class enemy. The struggle will be a severe but thankful one. There is no doubt among us about our having to shoulder the full burden of this struggle, because it is necessary and inevitable.

An enormous amount of preparatory work will be required in the carrying out of this measure: a form of declaration must be drawn up, propaganda must be carried on in the localities, the period in which the old money will be exchanged for the new must be fixed, and so forth. But we shall get all this done. This is the last and decisive battle with the bourgeoisie, which will enable us to pay the debts to foreign capital—until the hour of the social revolution strikes in the West—and carry out the necessary economic reforms in the country.

Lenin's concluding remarks, in which he expressed the conviction that the measures he had enumerated would meet with the sympathy of all who prized culture and the gains of the revolution, were greeted with loud and prolonged applause.

Newspaper account of speech at Congress of Representatives of Finance Departments of Local Soviets, May 18, 1918.

Izvestia, No. 99 (363), May 19, 1918.

# NATIONALISATION OF INDUSTRIES

HAVING heard the communication of the comrades elected by a workers' delegation at the conference of representatives of the large metal factories, and bearing in mind the resolution adopted by the conference, I am able to say that, in my opinion, the Council of People's Commissars will certainly be unanimously in favour of immediate nationalisation if the conference will do its utmost to secure planned and systematic organisation of work and increased productivity.

Hence, it is desirable that the conference: (1) immediately elect a Provisional Council to prepare for the amalgamation of the factories; (2) authorise the Central Committee of the Metal Workers' Union, with the concurrence of the Supreme Council of National Economy, to reorganise them and to add members to this Provisional Council for the purpose of transforming it into a management board of a single union (or amalgamation) of all the nationalised works; (3) approve, or by means of a resolution legalise, factory regulations, on the model of the Bryansk regulations, for the purpose of creating strict labour discipline; (4) nominate candidates from among qualified experts, engineers and organisers of large-scale production, for the management board, or authorise the Supreme Council of National Economy to select and appoint such; (5) it is desirable that workers from the best organised works, or those having most experience in managing large-scale production, be sent (by the Provisional Council or by the Central Committee of the Metal Workers' Union) to assist in properly organising affairs at the less successful factories; (6) by keeping the strictest account and control of all materials and of productivity of labour, we must achieve, and we can achieve, enormous economies in raw material and labour.

I think that if the conference and the bodies it sets up work

energetically, it will be possible to have the nationalisation passed by the Council of People's Commissars within the next few days.

Letter to Conference of Representatives of Nationalised Enterprises, May 18, 1918.

lzvestia, No. 99 (363), May 19, 1918.

#### AN APPEAL TO PETROGRAD WORKERS

THE Soviet system can be upheld, the victory of the toilers and exploited *over* the landlords and capitalists can be upheld and consolidated only by the stern, iron rule of the class-conscious workers. Only such a system can attract and rally around it all the toiling people, all the poor.

Comrades, workers, remember that the revolution is in a critical plight! Remember that you alone can save the revolution, nobody else.

What we need is tens of thousands of picked, politically advanced workers, loyal to the cause of socialism, incapable of succumbing to bribery and the temptations of pilfering, and capable of creating an iron force against the kulaks, profiteers, marauders, grafters and disorganisers.

That is what we urgently and insistently need.

Failing that, famine, unemployment and the ruin of the revolution are inevitable.

The strength of the workers and their salvation lie in organisation. Everybody knows that. Today what we need is a special kind of organisation of the workers, the organisation of the iron rule of the workers in order to vanquish the bourgeoisie. Comrades, workers, the cause of the revolution, the salvation of the revolution, is in your hands!

Time is short: an intolerably difficult May will be followed by a still more difficult June and July, and perhaps even part of August.

Telegram, May 21, 1918.

Petrogradskaya Pravda, No. 103 (329), May 22, 1918.

#### THE FAMINE

THE other day I received a visit from your delegate, a party comrade, a worker in the Putilov Works. This comrade drew a detailed and extremely harrowing picture of the food shortage in Petrograd. We all know that the food situation is just as acute in a number of the industrial provinces, that starvation is knocking just as menacingly at the door of the workers and the poor generally.

And side by side with this we observe an orgy of profiteering in grain and other food products. The famine is not due to the fact that there is no bread in Russia, but to the fact that the bourgeoisie and the rich generally are putting up a last decisive fight against the rule of the toilers, against the state of the workers, against the Soviet government, on this most important and acute of questions, the question of bread. The bourgeoisie and the rich generally, including the rural rich, the kulaks, are doing their best to thwart the grain monopoly; they are dislocating the distribution of grain undertaken by the state for the purpose of supplying bread to the population, and in the first place to the workers, the toilers, the needy. The bourgeoisie are disrupting the fixed prices, they are profiteering in grain, they are making a hundred, two hundred and more rubles profit on every pood of grain; they are undermining the grain monopoly and the proper distribution of grain by resorting to bribery and corruption and by maliciously supporting everything tending to destroy the power of the workers, which is endeavouring to put into effect the prime, basic and root principle of socialism: "He who does not work, neither shall he eat."

"He who does not work, neither shall he eat"—that is comprehensible to every toiler. Every worker, every poor peasant, even every middle peasant, everybody who has suffered need in his lifetime, everybody who has ever lived by his own labour, is in agreement

with this. Nine-tenths of the population of Russia are in agreement with this truth. In this simple, elementary and obvious truth lies the basis of socialism, the indestructible source of its strength, the indelible pledge of its final victory.

But the whole point of the matter is that it is one thing to subscribe to this truth, to swear one's allegiance to it, to give it verbal recognition, but it is another to be able to put it into effect. When thousands and millions of people are suffering the pangs of hunger (in Petrograd, in the non-agricultural provinces and in Moscow) in a country where millions and millions of poods of grain are being concealed by the rich, the kulaks and the profiteers—in a country which calls itself a Socialist Soviet Republic—there is matter for the most serious and profound thought on the part of every enlightened worker and peasant.

"He who does not work, neither shall he eat"—how is this to be put into effect? It is as clear as daylight that in order to put it into effect we require, first, a state grain monopoly, i.e., the absolute prohibition of all private trade in grain, the compulsory delivery of all surplus grain to the state at a fixed price, the absolute prohibition of all withholding and concealment of surplus grain, no matter by whom. Secondly, we require the strictest registration of all grain surpluses, the irreproachable organisation of the transport of grain from places of abundance to places of shortage, and the creation of reserves for consumption, for manufacturing purposes and for seed. Thirdly, we require a just and proper distribution of bread, controlled by the workers' state, the proletarian state, among all the citizens of the state, a distribution which will permit of no privileges and advantages for the rich.

One has only to reflect ever so slightly on these conditions for coping with the famine to realise the abysmal stupidity of the contemptible Anarchist windbags who deny the necessity of a state power (and, what is more, a power which will be ruthless in its severity towards the bourgeoisie and ruthlessly firm towards disorganisers) for the transition from capitalism to communism and for the emancipation of the working people from all forms of oppression and exploitation. It is at this moment, when our revolution is directly tackling the concrete and practical tasks involved in the realisation of socialism—and therein lies its indelible merit—it is at this moment, and in connection with this most important of questions, the question

of bread, that the need becomes absolutely clear for an iron revolutionary government, for a dictatorship of the proletariat, for the organised collection of products, for their transport and distribution on a mass, national scale, a distribution which will take into account the requirements of tens and hundreds of millions of people, which will calculate the conditions and the results of production for a year and many years ahead (for there are sometimes years of bad harvest, there are methods of land improvement essential for increasing grain crops which require years of work, and so forth).

Romanov and Kerensky bequeathed to the working class a country utterly impoverished by their predatory, criminal and most burdensome war, a country picked clean by Russian and foreign imperialists. Food will suffice for all only if we keep the strictest account of every pood, only if every pound is distributed absolutely systematically. There is also an acute shortage of food for machines, *i.e.*, fuel: the railroads and factories will come to a standstill, unemployment and famine will bring ruin on the whole nation, if we do not bend every effort to establish a strict and ruthless economy of consumption and proper distribution. We are faced with disaster; it is approaching very, very fast. An intolerably severe May will be followed by a still more severe June, July and August.

Our state grain monopoly exists by law, but in practice it is being thwarted at every step by the bourgeoisie. The rural rich, the kulak, the parasite who has been robbing the whole neighbourhood for decades, prefers to enrich himself by profiteering and illicit distilling: that, you see, is quite advantageous to his pocket, while he throws the blame for the famine on the Soviet government. That, too, is the line of the political defenders of the kulak, the Cadets, the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, who are overtly and covertly "working" against the grain monopoly and against the Soviet government. The party of spineless individuals, the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, are displaying their spinelessness here too; they are giving way to the covetous howls and outcries of the bourgeoisie, they are crying out against the grain monopoly, they are "protesting" against the food dictatorship, they are allowing themselves to be intimidated by the bourgeoisie, they are afraid to fight the kulak, and are hysterically tossing hither and thither, recommending that the fixed prices be raised, that private trading be sanctioned, and so forth.

This party of spineless individuals reflects in politics very much of what takes place in ordinary life when the kulak incites the poor peasants against the Soviets, bribes them by, say, letting some poor peasant have a pood of grain not for six, but for three rubles, so that the poor peasant, thus corrupted, may himself "make a bit" by profiteering, "turn a penny" by selling that pood of grain at a profiteering price of one hundred and fifty rubles, and himself become a decrier of the Soviets, which have prohibited private trading in grain.

Whoever is capable of thinking, whoever is desirous of thinking ever so little, will see clearly what line this fight has taken.

Either the advanced and enlightened workers triumph and unite around themselves the poor peasant masses, establish rigid order, a mercilessly severe rule, a genuine dictatorship of the proletariat—either they compel the kulak to submit, and institute a proper distribution of food and fuel on a national scale; or the bourgeoisie, with the help of the kulaks, and with the indirect support of the spineless and muddle-headed (the Anarchists and the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries), overthrow the Soviet power and set up a Russo-German or a Russo-Japanese Kornilov, who will present the people with a sixteen-hour working day, two ounces of bread per week, mass shooting of workers and third degree methods as has been the case in Finland and the Ukraine.

Either—or. There is no middle course. The situation of the country is desperate in the extreme.

Whoever gives a thought to political life cannot but see that the Cadets, the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks are coming to an understanding as to who would be "pleasanter," a Russo-German or a Russo-Japanese Kornilov, as to who would crush the revolution more effectively and reliably, a crowned or a republican Kornilov.

It is time all enlightened and advanced workers came to an understanding. It is time they pulled themselves together and realised that every minute's delay may spell ruin to the country and ruin to the revolution.

Half-measures will be of no avail. Complaining will lead us nowhere. Attempts to secure food and fuel "in retail fashion," each man for himself, for his "own" factory, his "own" workshop, will only increase the disorganisation and assist the avaricious, filthy and dastardly work of the profiteers.

That is why, comrades, workers of Petrograd, I have taken the liberty of addressing this letter to you. Petrograd is not Russia. The Petrograd workers are only a small part of the workers of Russia. But they are one of the best, most advanced, most class conscious, most revolutionary, most steadfast detachments of the working class and of all the working people of Russia, and one of the least liable to succumb to empty phrases, to weak-willed despair and to the intimidation of the bourgeoisie. And it has frequently happened at critical moments in the life of a nation that even small advanced detachments of advanced classes have drawn the rest after them, have fired the masses with revolutionary enthusiasm and have accomplished tremendous historic feats.

"There were forty thousand of us at the Putilov Works," the delegate from the Petrograd workers said to me. "But the majority of them were 'temporary' workers, not proletarians, an unreliable, flabby lot. Fifteen thousand are now left, but these are proletarians, tried and steeled in the fight."

That is the sort of vanguard of the revolution—in Petrograd and throughout the country—that must sound the call, that must rise in its mass, that must understand that the salvation of the country is in its hands, that from it is demanded a heroism no less than that displayed in January and October 1905 and in February and October 1917, that a great crusade must be organised against the food profiteers, the kulaks, the parasites, the disorganisers and bribe-takers, a great crusade against the violators of strict state order in the collection, transport and distribution of food for the people and food for the machines.

The country and the revolution can be saved only by the mass effort of the advanced workers. We need tens of thousands of advanced and steeled proletarians, enlightened enough to explain matters to the millions of poor peasants all over the country and to assume the leadership of these millions; tempered enough ruthlessly to cast out of their midst and shoot all who allow themselves to be "tempted"—as indeed happens—by the temptations of profiteering, and to be transformed from fighters for the cause of the people into robbers; steadfast enough and devoted enough to the revolution to bear in an organised way all the hardships of the crusade and to carry it into every corner of the country for the establishment of order, for the consolidation of the local organs of Soviet government and for the

exercise of control in the localities over every pood of grain and every pood of fuel.

It is far more difficult to do this than to be heroic for a few days remaining in your accustomed place, without joining in a crusade, participating simply in an attempted insurrection against the idiot-monster Romanov or the fool and braggart Kerensky. Heroism displayed in prolonged and stubborn organisational work on a national scale is immeasurably more difficult than, but at the same time immeasurably superior to, heroism displayed in an insurrection.

But it has always been the strength of working class parties and of the working class that they look danger boldly, firmly and squarely in the face, that they do not fear to admit danger and soberly weigh the forces in their own camp and in the camp of the enemy, the camp of the exploiters. The revolution is progressing, developing and growing. The problems that face us are also growing. The struggle is broadening and deepening. Proper distribution of food and fuel, their procurement in greater quantities and their strict registration and control by the workers on a national scale—that is the real and main gateway to socialism. That is no longer a task of "revolution in general" but a communist task, a task which requires that the working people and the poor offer determined battle to capitalism.

And it is a battle worth devoting all one's strength to; its difficulties are immense, but so is the cause of the abolition of oppression and exploitation for which we are fighting.

When the people are starving, when unemployment is becoming ever more menacing, anyone who conceals an extra pood of grain, anyone who deprives the state of a pood of fuel is an out-and-out criminal.

At such a time—and for a truly communist society this is always true—every pood of grain and fuel is veritably sacred, much more so than the sacred things which priests use to confuse the minds of fools, promising them the kingdom of heaven as a reward for slavery on earth. And in order to rid this genuinely sacred thing of every remnant of the "sacredness" of the priests, we must take possession of it practically; we must achieve its proper distribution in practice; we must collect the whole of it without exception, every particle of surplus grain must be brought into the state reserves, the whole country must be swept clean of concealed or ungarnered grain

surpluses; we need the firm hand of the worker to harness every effort, to increase the output of fuel and to secure the greatest economy and the greatest efficiency in the transport and consumption of fuel.

We need a mass crusade of the advanced workers to every centre of production of grain and fuel, to every important centre where they are transported and distributed; a mass crusade to increase the intensity of work tenfold, to assist the local organs of Soviet government in the matter of registration and control, and to eradicate profiteering, graft and slovenliness by armed force. This is not a new problem. History, properly speaking, is not creating new problems. All it is doing is to increase the size and scope of the old problems as the scope of the revolution, its difficulties and the grandeur of its historic aims increase.

One of the great and indelible features of the October Revolution—the Soviet revolution—is that the advanced worker, as the leader of the poor, as the captain of the toiling masses of the countryside, as the builder of the state of the toilers, has gone among the "people." Petrograd and other proletarian centres have given thousands and thousands of their best workers to the countryside. The detachments of fighters against Kaledin and Dutov,\* and the food detachments are nothing new! Only, the proximity of disaster, the acuteness of the situation compel us to do ten times more than before.

When the worker became the vanguard leader of the poor he did not thereby become a saint. He led the people forward, but he also became infected with the diseases of petty-bourgeois disintegration. The fewer the detachments of best organised, of most enlightened and most disciplined and steadfast workers were, the more frequently these detachments degenerated, the more frequently the small-owner instincts of the past triumphed over the proletarian-communist consciousness of the future.

Though the working class has begun the communist revolution, it cannot instantly discard the weaknesses and vices inherited from the society of landlords and capitalists, the society of exploiters and parasites, the society based on the filthy cupidity and personal gain of a few and the poverty of the many. But the working class can defeat the old world—and in the end will certainly and inevitably defeat the old world—with its vices and weaknesses, if against the enemy are brought ever greater and stronger detachments of workers, ever

<sup>•</sup> Generals, leaders of counter-revolutionary armies during the Civil War.—Ed.

more enlightened by experience and tempered by the hardships of the struggle.

Such is the state of affairs in Russia today. Single-handed and disunited we shall never be able to cope with famine and unemployment. We need a mass crusade of advanced workers to every corner of this vast country. We need ten times as many iron detachments of the proletariat, enlightened and boundlessly devoted to communism. Then, we shall triumph over hunger and unemployment. Then, we shall advance the revolution to the real gateway to socialism, and then too we shall be in a position to conduct a triumphant war of defence against the imperialist plunderers.

Letter to Petrograd workers, May 22, 1918.

Pravda, No. 101, May 24, 1918.

## LABOUR DISCIPLINE

COMRADES, permit me at the very outset to greet this congress of labour commissars on behalf of the Council of People's Commissars.

We were informed by Shlyapnikov at yesterday's meeting of the Council of People's Commissars that your congress has endorsed the resolution of the trade unions on the subject of labour discipline and standards of production. In my opinion, this decision of yours is a very important step, not only as regards productivity of labour and conditions of production; it is also a very important step in principle as regards the present situation in general. You have permanent contacts with the broadest mass of the workers in the course of your activities, not just chance ones, and you know that our revolution is passing through one of the most important and crucial moments in its development.

You are aware that our enemies, the Western imperialists, are lying in wait for us, and a moment may perhaps come when they will launch their hordes against us. Today these external enemies are being joined by another dangerous enemy—an internal one, namely, disruption, chaos and disorganisation, exacerbated by the bourgeoisie in general and the petty bourgeoisie in particular, and by the various followers and hangers-on of the bourgeoisie. You are aware that the aftermath of the agonising war into which we were plunged by the tsarist regime and by the compromisers, headed by Kerensky, has been disintegration and utter disruption. And now the most crucial moment of all is approaching, when hunger and unemployment are knocking at the doors of ever larger numbers of workers, when hundreds and thousands of people are suffering the pangs of hunger, when the situation is aggravated by the fact that we have no bread—although we might have it—and when we

know that the proper distribution of bread depends on its proper delivery.

The fuel shortage, which has arisen since our rich fuel area was cut off, and the catastrophic state of the railways, which may be on the verge of a total suspension of traffic—there you have the conditions which are creating difficulties for the revolution; there you have the situation which is filling the hearts of the Kornilovites of every shade and colour with glee. Every day, perhaps every hour, they are trying to reach agreement as to how to take advantage of the difficulties of the Soviet Republic and the proletarian government in order to reinstate a Kornilov on the throne. They may differ over the nationality of this future Kornilov, but he must be one that will suit the ends of the bourgeoisie—be he a crowned Kornilov or a republican. The workers now know what it is all about, and after what the Russian Revolution has been through, after Kerensky, they will not be surprised. But then the strength of the workers' organisation, of the workers' revolution, has always been that it does not close its eyes to the facts and faces the situation squarely.

We have said that war waged on its present scale and attended by its present unparalleled sufferings threatens the complete downfall of European civilisation. The only way of salvation lies in the transfer of power to the workers for the purpose of establishing the strictest order. Since 1905, owing to the course taken by the Russian Revolution and to the special historical situation that has arisen, our Russian proletariat has for a certain time proved to be far in advance of the other international armies of the proletariat. We are now passing through a period when revolution is ripening in all the West-European countries, and when the utter hopelessness of the position of the workers' armies in Germany is becoming clear. We know that over there, in the West, the working people are confronted not by a mouldering regime of Romanovs and empty braggarts, but by a bourgeoisie organised to a man and with all the achievements of modern culture and technology at its command. That is why our revolution was easy to start but harder to continue, and why over there, in the West, the revolution will be harder to start but easier to continue. Our difficulty is that we have to do everything by the efforts of the Russian proletariat alone and have to hold on until our ally—the international proletariat of all countries—is strong enough. It becomes more and more perceptible every day that there is no other way out. It is our lot to experience the main difficulty, for besides having no reinforcements, we are confronted with the breakdown of the railways, the transport system and the food supply. This must be made clear to everybody.

I hope that this congress of labour commissars, who are in closest contact with the workers, will not only mark a stage in directly improving that system of labour which we must make the basis of socialism, but will also mark a stage in clarifying the minds of the workers as to the character of the times we are passing through. The working class is faced with a difficult but thankful task, on which the fate of socialism in Russia, and in other countries too, perhaps, will depend. That is why the resolution on labour discipline is such an important one.

Now that the power is firmly in the hands of the workers, everything will depend on proletarian discipline and proletarian organisation. It is a question of the discipline and dictatorship of the proletariat, of an iron regime. Our regime, which enjoys the most ardent sympathy and the most determined support of the poor, must be an iron regime, because untold misfortunes are impending. Large numbers of workers are still under the sway of the old order, and they hope we shall extricate ourselves from this situation somehow or other.

But these illusions are being dissipated more and more every day, and it is becoming increasingly obvious that the World War threatens whole countries with famine and deterioration unless the working class copes with this disruption by its power of organisation. We find, side by side with the class-conscious elements of the working class, who are directing all their efforts to making the new discipline of comradeship the basis of life, a mass of millions of small property-owning and petty-bourgeois elements who regard everything from the standpoint of their own narrow interests. The starvation and disaster which are moving down on us can be coped with only if the class-conscious workers establish the strictest order; otherwise we can do nothing.

Owing to Russia's vast area, we have a situation in which there is plenty of grain at one end of the country and none at the other. It is no use thinking we will not have to fight a defensive war; it may be forced upon us. It is no use thinking that we can feed the towns and the big industrial centres without proper transport. We must keep an account of every pood of grain, so that not a single pood

goes astray. We know, however, that actually an account is not being kept, that it remains only on paper. What we find in reality is that the petty profiteers are corrupting the poor peasants by giving them the idea that the shortage can be made good by private trade. We shall never escape from the crisis, that being the case. There will be enough food in Russia for people and enough food for industry—that is, fuel—only if everything we have is strictly apportioned among all the citizens, so that nobody can take a single pound of bread more than is due him, and not a single pound of fuel remains unused. That is the only way to save the country from starvation. We learnt this lesson of communist distribution—to keep an account of everything so as to have food for people and fuel for industry—not from books, but from bitter experience.

It may be some time before the broad mass of the workers realise that we are on the verge of disaster. What we need is a crusade of the workers against disorganisation and concealment of grain. What we need is a crusade to extend labour discipline—on the subject of which you have adopted a resolution and of which you have spoken only as it applied to the mills and factories—a crusade to extend this labour discipline to the whole country, and to get the broad masses to understand that there is no other way out. In the history of our revolution, the strength of the class-conscious workers has always lain in the fact that they look the most bitter and dangerous realities squarely and bluntly in the face, cherishing no illusions and accurately gauging their forces. We can count only on the class-conscious workers; the remaining mass, the bourgeoisie and the small masters, are against us; they have no faith in the new order and seize on every opportunity to aggravate the distress of the people. An example of this is what we are witnessing in the Ukraine and in Finland: unparalleled atrocities and oceans of blood in which the bourgeoisie and its followers, from the Cadets to the Socialist-Revolutionaries, are drowning whole cities, vanquishing them with the aid of their allies. All this shows what the proletariat may expect if it does not fulfil its historical mission. We know how small is the number of advanced and class-conscious workers in Russia. We also know what effect the distress of the people will have; we know that a point will be reached when the broad masses will understand that half-measures cannot save them, and that a proletarian revolution is indispensable. We are living at a time when whole countries are being devastated

and millions of people reduced to military servitude and sent to their doom. That is the revolution history has imposed upon us, not because of the malice of individuals, but because the entire capitalist system is tottering and cracking at its foundations.

Comrades labour commissars, take advantage of every visit to a mill or factory, of every meeting with a workers' delegation, of every other opportunity to explain the situation. Make them understand that we are faced with ruin unless we seize the opportunity of defending ourselves, that we are menaced with the return of the Kornilovites-Russian, Japanese or German-who will reduce us to two ounces of bread a week, unless the class-conscious workers, at the head of all the poor, organise a crusade against the chaos and disorganisation which the petty bourgeoisie are everywhere aggravating, and which we must vanquish. The important thing is that the class-conscious worker should feel not only that he is the master of his factory, but a representative of the country, and should realise his responsibility. The class-conscious worker must know that he represents his class. He is bound to win if he leads the movement against the bourgeoisie and the profiteers. The class-conscious worker will realise what is the cardinal task of the Socialist, and then we shall win. Then the forces will be found, and we shall be able to fight.

Speech at Congress of Labour Commissars, May 22, 1918.

Prauda, No. 101, May 24, 1918.

# ORGANISATION OF NATIONAL ECONOMY

COMRADES, permit me first of all to greet the Congress of Councils of National Economy on behalf of the Council of People's Commissars.

Upon the Supreme Council of National Economy now devolves a most difficult, but most grateful task. There is not the slightest doubt that the further the gains of the October Revolution progress, the more profound the change which it has commenced becomes and the more firmly the gains of the socialist revolution are established and the socialist system consolidated, the greater and higher will become the role of the councils of national economy. Alone of all the state institutions they are destined all the more to occupy a lasting place, a place which will be all the more lasting, the nearer we approach to the establishment of the socialist system and the less the need for a purely administrative apparatus, an apparatus, properly speaking, engaged solely in governing. After the resistance of the exploiters has been finally broken, after the working people have learnt to organise socialist production, this apparatus of government in the proper, strict and narrow sense of the word, this apparatus of the old state, is doomed to die, while the apparatus of the type of the Supreme Council of National Economy is destined to grow, to develop and become strong, and to embrace all the main functions of organised society.

That is why when I look back on the experience of our Supreme Council of National Economy and of the local Councils, with the activities of which it is closely and inseparably connected, I think that in spite of much that is unfinished, incomplete, and unorganised, there is not the slightest ground for pessimistic conclusions. For the task which the Supreme Council of National Economy set itself, and which all the regional and local councils set themselves, is so enormous, so all-embracing, that there is absolutely nothing to give

rise to alarm. Very often-from our point of view, perhaps too often, of course—the proverb "measure your cloth seven times before you cut it" was not applied. Unfortunately, things are not so simple in regard to the organisation of economy on socialist lines as that proverb puts it. With the transfer of all power—this time not only political, and not even mainly political, but economic power, that is, power that affects the most deep-seated foundations of every-day human existence—to a new class, and moreover to a class which for the first time in the history of humanity is the leader of the overwhelming majority of the population, of the whole mass of the toilers and exploited—our tasks become more complicated. It goes without saying that in view of the great importance and the great difficulty of the organisational tasks that confront us, when we have to organise on entirely new lines the very foundations of the human existence of hundreds of millions of people, it is not simple to arrange matters as is the proverb "measure your cloth seven times before you cut it." For, indeed, we are not in a position first to measure a thing innumerable times and then cut and fix what has been finally measured and fitted. We must build our economic edifice in the process of the work, trying out this or that institution, watching it work, testing it by the collective common experience of the toilers, and, above all, by the results of its work. We must do this in the very process of the work, and, moreover, in the midst of desperate struggles and the furious resistance of the exploiters, who become the more furious, the nearer we come to the time when we can pull the last decayed teeth of capitalist exploitation once and for all.

Clearly, under the circumstances, there can be no grounds for pessimism, although of course it furnishes considerable grounds for malicious outbursts on the part of the bourgeoisie and of Messieurs the exploiters whose finest sentiments have been wounded when sometimes even in a short space of time we have again and again to alter types, regulations and organs of administration of various branches of national economy. Of course, those who take a very close and direct part in this work sometimes do not find it very pleasant or derive any great satisfaction from altering the rules, standards and regulations of the Chief Water Transport Board, say, three or four times over. But if we abstract ourselves somewhat from the immediate unpleasantness of too frequent alteration of decrees, and if we look further and more deeply into the enormous world-historic task that

the Russian proletariat has to carry out so far with its own inadequate forces, it will become immediately clear that even far more frequent alterations and experimental tests of various systems of administration and various forms of securing discipline are inevitable. In such a gigantic task, we could never claim, and no sensible Socialist who has written on the prospects of the future has ever believed, that we could devise and establish at one stroke the forms of organisation of the new society according to some premeditated pattern. All that we knew, all that the best experts on capitalist society, the best minds who foresaw the development of capitalist society, could tell us precisely was that this transformation would, with historical inevitability, proceed along a certain main line, that private ownership of the means of production had been doomed by history, that it would burst, that the exploiters would inevitably be expropriated. This was established with scientific precision; and we knew this when we grasped the banner of socialism, when we proclaimed ourselves Socialists, when we formed Socialist parties, when we set out to transform society. We knew this when we took power for the purpose of proceeding with socialist reorganisation; but we could not know the form this transformation would take, or the rate of development of the concrete reorganisation. Only collective experience, only the experience of millions can give us decisive guidance in this respect; because, for the purposes of our task, for the purpose of building socialism, the experience of the hundreds and hundreds of thousands who constitute the upper strata which have made history up to now both in landlord society and in capitalist society is insufficient. We cannot proceed in this way just because we rely on joint experience, on the experience of millions of toilers.

That is why we know that the work of organisation, which is the main and fundamental, the root task of the councils, will inevitably entail a vast number of experiments, a vast number of steps, a vast number of alterations, a vast number of difficulties, particularly in regard to the question of how to put people in the right places; because here we have no experience, here we have to devise every step ourselves. But grave as may be the mistakes we make in this attempt, the more the certainty grows that with every increase in the membership of the trade unions, with every additional thousand, with every additional hundred thousand that come over from the camp of the toilers and exploited, who have hitherto lived according to tradition

and habit, into the camp of the builders of Soviet organisations, the number of people who answer to the requirements of the task and who will organise the work on proper lines will grow.

Take one of the secondary tasks that the national economic council, the Supreme Council of National Economy, particularly comes up against—the task of utilising bourgeois experts. We all know, at least those who base themselves on science and socialism know, that our task can be fulfilled only when and to the extent that international capitalism has developed the material and technical prerequisites of labour organised on an enormous scale and based on the framework of science, and hence on the training of enormous cadres of scientifically educated experts. We know that without this socialism is impossible. If we peruse the works of those Socialists who observed the development of capitalism during the last half century, and who again and again came to the conclusion that socialism is inevitable, we will find that all of them without exception pointed out that only socialism can liberate science from its bourgeois fetters, from its enslavement to capital, from its thraldom to the interests of sordid capitalist greed. Socialism alone will make possible a wide expansion of social production and distribution and their actual subordination to scientific considerations with a view to easing the lives of the working people and making it possible for them to live in prosperity. Socialism alone can achieve this. We know that it must achieve it, and in the understanding of this truth lie the whole difficulty of Marxism, and its strength.

We must achieve this while relying on elements which are hostile to it, because the bigger capital becomes, the more the bourgeoisie oppresses and represses the workers. Now that power is in the hands of the proletariat and the poor peasants, and the government is setting itself tasks with the support of these masses, we must achieve these socialist changes with the help of bourgeois experts, of experts who have been trained in bourgeois society, who know no other system and cannot conceive of any other social system; so that even when these people are absolutely sincere and loyal to their work they are imbued with thousands of bourgeois prejudices, are connected by thousands of ties they themselves do not see with bourgeois society, which is dying and decaying and is therefore putting up a furious resistance. We cannot conceal from ourselves the difficulties of the task and its achievement. Of all the Socialist authors who have

written about this, I cannot recall the work of a single one, nor am I aware of the opinion of a single prominent Socialist on future socialist society, which pointed to the concrete practical difficulty that would confront the working class when it took power, when it set itself the task of transforming the sum total of the rich store of culture and knowledge and technique which capitalism has accumulated, and which historical inevitability has made vital for us, from an instrument of capitalism into an instrument of socialism. It is easy to do this in a general formula, in abstract contrasts, but in the struggle against capitalism, which does not die all at once but puts up increasingly furious resistance the closer its end approaches, this task is one that calls for tremendous effort. Experiments in this field, the repeated rectification of partial mistakes are inevitable because it is impossible, in this or that sphere of national economy, to transform the experts from servants of capitalism into the servants of the working masses, into their advisers, all at once.

The fact that we cannot do this all at once should not give rise to the slightest pessimism, because the task which we have set ourselves is one of world historic difficulty and significance. We do not shut our eyes to the fact that in a single country, even if it were a much less backward country than Russia, even if we were living amidst better conditions than those prevailing after four years of unprecedented, painful, severe and ruinous war, we could not by our own efforts carry out the socialist revolution completely. He who turns away from the socialist revolution now taking place in Russia and points to the obvious inadequacy of forces is like the conservative "man in a muffler" \* who cannot see further than his nose, who forgets that there never was a historical change of any importance where the forces were not in many cases inadequate. Forces grow in the process of the struggle, with the growth of the revolution.

Now that the country has taken the path of profound changes it is to the credit of this country and of the party of the working class which has achieved victory in this country, that they have taken up in a practical manner tasks that were formerly treated abstractly, theoretically. This experience will not be forgotten. The experience of the workers who are now united in trade unions and local organisations and are tackling the practical work of organising the whole of production on a national scale cannot be lost, no matter what may

<sup>\*</sup> A character in a story by Chekhov, typifying the timid petty bureaucrat.—Ed.

come, no matter what painful vicissitudes the Russian revolution and the international socialist revolution may have to pass through. It has gone into history as a gain of socialism, and on it the future international revolution will erect its socialist edifice.

Permit me to mention another problem, perhaps the most difficult problem that the Supreme Council of National Economy has now to tackle practically, that is, the problem of labour discipline. Properly speaking in mentioning this problem, we ought to admit and emphasise with satisfaction that it was the trade unions—their largest organisations, namely, the Central Committee of the Metal Workers' Union and the All-Russian Council of Trade Unions, the highest trade union bodies, uniting millions of toilers—which were the first to set to work independently to solve this problem; and it is a problem of world-historic importance.

In order to understand it, we must abstract ourselves from those partial minor failures, from the incredible difficulties which, if taken separately, seem to be insurmountable. We must rise to a higher level and survey the historical change of social economic systems. Only from this angle will it be possible to appreciate the immensity of the task which we have undertaken. Only then will it be possible to appreciate the enormous significance of the fact that on this occasion the most advanced representatives of society,—the toiling and exploited masses—are, on their own initiative, taking upon themselves a job which hitherto, in feudal Russia, up to 1861, was performed by a handful of landlords who regarded it as their special function. At that time it was their function to create nationwide connections and discipline. We know how the feudal landlords imposed this discipline. It meant oppression, humiliation and incredible inhuman suffering for the majority of the people. Recall the transition from serfdom to bourgeois economy. From all that you have witnessed-although the majority of you could not have witnessed it—and from all that you have learnt from the older generation, you know how comparatively easy, historically speaking, was the transition to the new bourgeois economy after 1861, the transition from the old feudal discipline of the rod, from the discipline of senseless, arrogant and brutal insult and violence against the person, to bourgeois discipline, to the discipline of starvation, of so-called free hire, which in fact was the discipline of capitalist slavery.

This was because mankind passed from one exploiter to another;

because one minority of plunderers and exploiters of the labour of the people gave way to another minority who were also plunderers and exploiters of the labour of the people; because the landlords gave way to the capitalists, one minority gave way to another minority, while the broad mass of the toiling and exploited classes were oppressed. And even this change from one exploiter's discipline to another exploiter's discipline took years, if not decades, of effort. It took years, if not decades, of a transition period, during which the old feudal landlords quite sincerely believed that everything was going to rack and ruin, that it was impossible to run anything without serfdom, when the new capitalist master encountered practical difficulties at every step and gave up his enterprise in disgust, and when the material sign, one of the material evidences of the difficulties of this transition, was the fact that Russia imported machinery from abroad in order to employ the best equipment, and it turned out that there were neither the people to operate these machines, nor managers. And all over Russia one could see excellent machinery lying around unused, so difficult was the transition from the old feudal discipline to the new bourgeois capitalist discipline.

And so if you look at the matter from this angle, you will not allow yourselves to be misled by those people, by those classes, by the bourgeoisie and their hangers-on, whose sole task it is to sow panic and despondency, to cause complete despondency concerning all our work, to make it out to be hopeless, and who point to every individual case of indiscipline and demoralisation and on that account turn away in disgust from the revolution—as if there was ever in the world, in history, a single really great revolution in which there was no demoralisation, no loss of discipline, no painful trial steps when the masses were creating a new discipline. We must not forget that this is the first time this turning point in history has been reached, when a new discipline, a labour discipline, the discipline of comradely relations, Soviet discipline, is being created by millions of toilers and exploited. We do not claim, nor do we expect quick successes in this field. We know that this task will take up a whole historic epoch. We have begun this historic epoch, an epoch in which we are breaking up the discipline of capitalist society in a country which is still bourgeois, and we are proud of the fact that all the class-conscious workers, absolutely all the toiling peasants are helping this destruction in every way; an epoch in which the masses, voluntarily, on their own

initiative, are becoming imbued with the conviction that they must—not on instructions from above, but following the dictates of their own living experience—discard this discipline, based on the exploitation and slavery of the toilers, for the new discipline of united labour, the discipline of the united organised workers and toiling peasants of the whole of Russia, of a land with a population of tens and hundreds of millions. This is a task of enormous difficulty, but it is a thankful one, because only when we have fulfilled it in practice shall we have driven the last nail into the coffin of capitalist society which we are consigning to its tomb.

Speech at First Congress of Councils of National Economy, May 26, 1918.

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## HOW TO COMBAT THE FAMINE

COMRADES, the subject I am about to speak of today is the great crisis which has overtaken all modern countries and which is now perhaps pressing most severely on Russia, or, at any rate, is being felt by her far more severely than by other countries. And I must speak of this crisis, the famine which has afflicted us, in conjunction with the problems that confront us as a result of the general situation. And when we speak of the general situation, we cannot of course confine ourselves to Russia, all the more so because all countries of modern capitalist civilisation are now linked together more painfully and more distressingly than ever before.

Everywhere, both in the belligerent countires and in the neutral countries, the war, the imperialist war between two groups of gigantic plunderers, has resulted in an utter exhaustion of productive forces. Ruin and impoverishment have reached such a pitch that the most advanced, civilised and cultured countries, which for decades, nay for centuries, have not known what famine means, have been brought by the war to the point of famine in the genuine and literal sense of the term. It is true that in the advanced countries, especially in those in which large-scale capitalism has long ago trained the population to the maximum level of economic organisation possible under that system, they have succeeded in properly distributing the famine, in keeping it longer at bay and in rendering it less acute. But Germany and Austria, for example, not to speak of the countries that have been defeated and subjugated, have for a long time been suffering from real starvation. Nowadays, you can scarcely open a single issue of a newspaper without coming across numerous reports from advanced and cultured countries-not only belligerent, but also neutral countries, such as Switzerland and certain of the Scandinavian

countries—regarding famine and the frightful calamities that have overtaken humanity as a result of the war.

Those who have been following the development of European society have long ceased to doubt that capitalism cannot end peacefully and that it will lead either directly to a revolt of the broad masses against the yoke of capital or to the same result by the much more severe, painful and bloody way of war.

For many years prior to the war the Socialists of all countries pointed out, and solemnly declared at their congresses,\* that a war between advanced countries would not only be an enormous crime, that such a war for the partition of the colonies and the division of the spoils of the capitalists would not only involve a complete rupture with the latest achievements of civilisation and culture, but that it might, and inevitably would, undermine the very foundations of human society. For it is for the first time in history that the most powerful achievements of technology are being applied on such a scale, so destructively and with such energy, for the wholesale extirpation of millions of human lives. When all productive forces are being thus devoted to the service of war, we see that the most gloomy prophecies are being fulfilled and that more and more countries are falling a prey to demoralisation, starvation and a complete decline of productive forces.

I am therefore led to recall how justified was Engels, one of the great founders of scientific socialism, when in 1887 he wrote that a European war would not only result, as he expressed it, in crowns falling from crowned heads by the dozen without anybody to pick them up, but that the war would also lead to the brutalisation, demoralisation and retrogression of the whole of Europe; and that, on the other hand, the war would result either in the domination of the working class or in the creation of the conditions which would render its domination indispensable. On this occasion the co-founder of Marxism expressed himself with extreme caution, for he clearly saw that if history took this course the result would be the collapse of capitalism and the extension of socialism, and that a more painful and severe transition period, greater want and a severer crisis, disruptive of all productive forces, one could not imagine.

<sup>\*</sup>Reference is made to decisions of the various international Socialist Congresses, from the Paris Congress of 1889 to the Extraordinary Basle Congress of 1912, when war seemed imminent.—Ed.

And we now clearly see the significance of the results of the imperialist slaughter of the peoples which has been dragging on for four years, when even the most advanced countries feel that the war has reached an impasse, that there is no escape from it under capitalism, and that it will lead to painful devastation. And if we, if the Russian revolution—which is not due to any particular merit of the Russian proletariat but to the general course of historical events, that by the will of history temporarily placed that proletariat in the foremost position and made it for the time being the vanguard of the world revolution—if it has befallen us to suffer with particular severity and acuteness the torments of famine, which is afflicting us more and more heavily, we must clearly realise that these misfortunes are primarily and chiefly a heritage of the accursed imperialist war. This war has brought incredible misfortunes on all countries, and it is only with temporary success that these misfortunes are being concealed from the masses and from the knowledge of the vast majority of the peoples.

As long as the yoke of war continues, as long as the war goes on, as long as it is accompanied on the one hand, by hopes of victory and a belief that it is possible to emerge from this crisis as the result of the victory of one of the imperialist groups, and, on the other hand, an unbridled military censorship prevails and the people are intoxicated by the spirit of militarism—this only keeps the masses of the majority of the countries in ignorance of the abyss on the verge of which they are standing, and into which they are already falling. And we are feeling this with particular acuteness now, because nowhere, as in Russia, is there such a crying contradiction to the vastness of the tasks set itself by the insurrectionary proletariat, which has understood that the war, the worldwide war between the most powerful imperialist giants of the earth, cannot be vanquished without a mighty proletarian revolution equally worldwide.

And since the march of events has led us to occupy one of the most prominent places in this revolution and to remain an isolated detachment, for a long time, at least since October 1917—other detachments of international socialism prevented from coming to our aid with sufficient rapidity, the position we find ourselves in now is ten times more severe. After we have done all that could be done by the directly insurgent proletariat and the poor peasantry supporting it to overthrow their chief enemy and to protect the socialist revolution, we find that at the same time the oppression of the imperialist

predatory powers surrounding Russia and the heritage of the war are weighing on us more and more heavily at every turn. These consequences of the war have not yet made themselves fully felt. We are now, in the summer of 1918, facing what is perhaps one of the most difficult, one of the most severe and critical transitional stages of our revolution. And its difficulty is not confined to the international arena, where our policy is inevitably bound to be one of retreat as long as our true and only ally, the international proletariat, is only preparing, only maturing, for revolt, but it is not yet in a position to come out openly and solidly, although the whole course of events in Western Europe—the furious savagery of the recent battles on the Western front, the crisis which is growing increasingly acute within the belligerent countries—all go to show that a revolt of the European workers is not far off, and that although it may be delayed it will inevitably come.

It is in such a situation that we are called upon to experience the greatest difficulties within the country. As a result vacillations are provoked most of all by the painful food shortage, by the famine which has overtaken us and which compels us to face a task demanding the maximum concentration of forces and the highest degree of organisation, and which at the same time does not permit a solution by the old methods. We shall tackle the solution of this problem together with the class with which we went against the imperialist war, the class with which we overthrew the imperialist monarchy and the imperialist republican bourgeoisie of Russia, the class that has to forge its weapons, develop its forces and create its organisation in the midst of increasing difficulties, increasing problems and the increasing sweep of the revolution.

We are now facing the most elementary task of human society—to vanquish famine, or at least to mitigate at once the direct famine, the painful famine which has afflicted both capitals and scores of districts of agricultural Russia. And we have to solve this problem in the midst of a civil war and the furious and desperate resistance of the exploiters of all ranks, colours, shades and orientations. For there can be no doubt that in such a situation the elements of political parties which cannot break with the old and believe in the new are in a state of war which has only one aim—to restore the exploiters.

The news we are receiving from every corner of Russia demands that we face this problem—the connection between the famine and

the fight against the exploiters and the counter-revolution which is raising its head. The task confronting us is to vanquish the famine, or at least to mitigate its severities until the new harvest, to uphold the grain monopoly and the laws of the Soviet state, the laws of the proletarian state. All surpluses of grain must be collected; we must see to it that all stocks are brought to the places where they are needed and that they are properly distributed. This fundamental task means the preservation of human society; at the same time it involves incredible effort, which can be performed only in one way—by general and increased intensification of labour.

In the countries where this problem is being solved by means of war, it is being solved by means of military servitude, by instituting military servitude for the workers and peasants; it is being solved by granting new and greater advantages to the exploiters. In Germany, for instance, where public opinion is suppressed, where every attempt to protest against the war is stifled, but where nevertheless socialist hostility to the war persists, you will not find a more common method of saving the situation than by the rapid increase in the number of millionaires who have grown rich on the war. These new millionaires have grown furiously rich.

In all the imperialist countries today the starvation of the masses offers the best field for the most unbridled profiteering; incredible fortunes are being amassed out of poverty and starvation.

This is encouraged by the imperialist countries, e.g., Germany, where starvation is organised best of all. Not without reason is it said that Germany is a centre of organised starvation, where better than anywhere else rations and crusts of bread are distributed among the population. There we see that new millionaires are becoming a common phenomenon of the imperialist state; indeed, they know no other way of combating starvation. They permit twofold, threefold and fourfold profits to be made by those who possess plenty of grain and who know how to profiteer and to turn organisation, rationing, regulation and distribution into profiteering. We do not wish to follow that course, no matter who may urge us to it, whether wittingly or unwittingly. We shall say that we stood and shall continue to stand shoulder to shoulder with the class together with which we opposed the war, together with which we overthrew the bourgeoisie and together with which we are bearing all the burdens of the present crisis. We must rigorously enforce the grain monopoly,

only not in a way that would legitimise capitalist profiteering, large or small, but by combating deliberate marauding.

And here we see greater difficulties and greater dangers in the struggle than when we were confronted by tsardom armed to the teeth against the people; or when we were confronted by the Russian bourgeoisie, which was also armed to the teeth and which in the June offensive of last year, having the secret treaties providing for participation in the division of spoils in its pocket, did not consider it a crime to shed the blood of hundreds of thousands of Russian workers and peasants, but which does consider a crime the war of the toilers against the oppressors, the only just and sacred war, of which we spoke at the very beginning of the imperialist slaughter and which events at every step are now inevitably associating with a famine.

We know that the tsarist autocracy from the very beginning instituted fixed prices for grain and raised those prices. Why not? It remained faithful to its allies, the grain merchants, the profiteers and the bank magnates who made millions out of it.

We know that the compromisers of the Cadet Party—together with the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks—and Kerensky established a grain monopoly, for all Europe was saying that without a monopoly they would not hold out any longer. And we know how this same Kerensky in August 1917 evaded the democratic law of the time. That is what democratic laws and artfully interpreted regimes are for, to be evaded. We know that in August this same Kerensky doubled those prices and that the Socialists of all shades at that time protested against and resented this measure. There was not a single newspaper at the time that was not outraged by Kerensky's conduct and that did not expose the fact that behind the republican Ministers, behind the cabinet of Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, were the manipulations of the profiteers, that the doubling of grain prices was a concession to them, that the whole business was nothing but a concession to the profiteers. We know that story.

We can now compare the course of the grain monopoly and of the fight against famine in the capitalist countries of Europe and in our country. We see what use the counter-revolutionaries are making of it. We must draw definite and inflexible conclusions from this lesson. The course of events was such that the crisis, having reached the pitch of a severe famine, only rendered the civil war still more acute. It only led to the exposure of parties like the Right Socialist-Revolu-

tionaries and the Mensheviks, who differ from that avowed capitalist party, the Cadets, only by the fact that the Cadet Party is a party of the open Black Hundreds. The Cadets have nothing to say to the people, are not obliged to address themselves to the people, and are not obliged to mask their aims, whereas these parties, who compromised with Kerensky and shared the power and the secret treaties with him, are obliged to address themselves to the people. And so they are from time to time forced to expose themselves, despite their wishes and their plans.

When, as a result of the famine, we see on the one hand the outbreak of uprisings and revolts of starving people and on the other a train of counter-revolutionary rebellions spreading like wildfire from one end of Russia to the other, obviously fed with funds from the British and French imperialists and the efforts of the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, we say the picture is clear and we leave it to whoever so desires to dream of united fronts.

We now see very clearly that after the Russian bourgeoisie was defeated in open military conflict, every open collision between the revolutionary and counter-revolutionary forces in the period from October 1917 to February and March 1918 proved to the counter-revolutionaries, even to the leaders of the Don Cossacks, in whom the greatest hopes had been placed, that their cause was lost, lost because everywhere the majority of the people were opposed to them. And every new attempt, everywhere without exception, even in the most patriarchal districts, where the peasants are well-to-do and most rigid in their caste exclusiveness, as, for instance, the Cossacks, has resulted only in new strata of the oppressed toilers actually rising against them.

The experience of the Civil War from October to March has shown that the toiling masses, the Russian working class and the peasants who live by their own labour and do not exploit the labour of others, are in their vast majority, all over Russia, in favour of the Soviet regime. But those who thought that we were already on the path of greater organic development were obliged to admit that they were mistaken.

The bourgeoisie saw that it was defeated. It has grown enfeebled and has not a sufficient hold on life, and no other forces can help it. So a split takes place among the Russian petty bourgeoisie: certain of them are drawn towards the Germans, others towards the AngloFrench orientation, while both have this in common, that they are united by the famine orientation.

In order that it may be clear to you that it is not our party but its enemies and the enemies of the Soviet government who are reconciling the differences between German orientation and Anglo-French orientation on a common program, viz., to overthrow the Soviet power as the result of famine—in order to make it clear how this is taking place, I will take the liberty of briefly quoting from the report of the recent conference of the Mensheviks. This report appeared in the newspaper Zhizn [Life].\*

From this report, printed in No. 26 of Zhizn, we learn that Cherevanin, who made a report on economic policy, criticised the policy of the Soviet government and proposed a compromise solution of the problem—to enlist the services of representatives of merchant capital, as practical businessmen, to act as commission agents on terms which would be favourable to them. We learn from this report that the chairman of the Northern Food Board, Groman, who was present at the conference, announced the following conclusions, which he had arrived at, so the report states, on the basis of a vast store of personal and all sorts of other observations—observations, let me add, made entirely in bourgeois circles: "Two methods," he said, "must be adopted: the first is that present prices must be raised; the second, that a special bonus must be given for prompt deliveries of grain," etc.

(Voice: "What is wrong with that?")

Ah, you will hear what is wrong with that, although the speaker, who has not received the floor but has taken it from over there in that corner, thinks he can convince you that there is nothing wrong with it. But he has presumably forgotten the course the Menshevik conference took. This same paper, Zhizn, states that Groman was followed by the delegate Kolokolnikov who expressed this point of view: "We are being invited to participate in the Bolshevik food organisations." Very wrong, is it not? That is what we have to say, recalling the interjection of the previous speaker. And if that speaker, who refuses to calm down and is taking the floor although he has not received it, cries out that it is a lie and that Kolokolnikov did not say that, I take note of the statement and request you to repeat that denial coherently and so that all may hear you. I take the liberty of recalling the resolution proposed at the conference by our old friend

Anarchist newspaper published in Moscow, April-June, 1918.—Ed.

Martov, in which, speaking on the question of the Soviet government, he literally says the same thing, although in different terms and phrases. Ah, however you may laugh at it, the fact remains that in connection with a report on the food situation Menshevik representatives say that the Soviet government is not a proletarian organisation but a useless organisation.

And at such a time, when owing to the famine, and in order to exploit the famine, counter-revolutionary revolt is on the order of the day, no denials and no artifices will avail, for it is a fact. We see the policy on this question effectively developed by Cherevanin, Groman and Kolokolnikov. The civil war is stirring, counter-revolution is raising its head, and I am convinced that ninety-nine per cent of the Russian workers and peasants have drawn, are drawing and will draw their conclusion from these events—although not everybody yet knows this—and that this conclusion will be that only by smashing counter-revolution, only by continuing a socialist policy in the matter of the famine, in combating the famine, shall we succeed in vanquishing both the famine and the counter-revolutionaries who are taking advantage of it.

We are now, in fact, at that point when the Soviet power, after a long and severe struggle against numerous and serious counterrevolutionary enemies, has defeated them in open battle, and, after having overcome both the military resistance of the exploiters and their sabotage, has definitely set about the task of organisation. This whole difficult struggle with famine and this whole tremendous problem is entirely to be explained by the fact that we have now definitely got down to the job of organisation.

Success in an insurrection is infinitely more easy. It is a million times easier to defeat the resistance of counter-revolution than to succeed in the sphere of organisation. This applies particularly to our solution of the task, in which the insurgent proletarian and the small property-owner, the broad sections of the petty bourgeoisie, can to a considerable extent join hands, and in which there are still many general-democratic and general-labour elements. We have now passed from this task to another. Acute famine has driven us to a purely communist task. Here we are confronted by a revolutionary socialist task. Incredible difficulties face us here.

We do not fear these difficulties. We were aware of them. We never said that the transition from capitalism to socialism would be

easy. It will be a whole era of fierce civil war, of painful steps, until such time as the detachment of the insurgent proletariat in one country is joined by the proletariat of another country, and mistakes are corrected by their joint efforts. The tasks that face us here are organisational tasks, those concerning general consumption, the roots of profiteering and the heights of the bourgeois world and of capitalist exploitation, heights which cannot be so easily removed by a simple mass assault. We have to deal here with the small roots and runners of bourgeois exploitation, which have taken a deep hold in all countries, in the form of the small property-owners, of their whole system of life, of the habits and sentiments of the small property-owner and the small master. We have to deal here with the small profiteer, with his unfamiliarity with the new system of life, his lack of faith in it, his despair.

For it is a fact that when they sensed the tremendous difficulties that confront us in the revolution, many members of the toiling masses gave way to despair. We do not fear that. There never has been a revolution anywhere in which certain sections of the population did not give way to despair.

When the masses put forth a disciplined vanguard, and that vanguard knows that this dictatorship, this firm government, will help to win over the poor peasants—this is a long process, involving a stern struggle—it is the beginning of the socialist revolution in the true sense of the term. When we see the united workers and the masses of poor peasants fighting the rich and the profiteers, yet people to whom intellectuals like Groman and Cherevanin are wittingly or unwittingly preaching profiteers' slogans—workers who have been led astray—advocate the free sale of grain and the import of rolling stock, we say that this means helping the kulaks out of the hole. That path we shall never take. We declare that we shall rely on the toiling elements, with whose help we achieved the October victory, and that only together with our own class, and only by establishing proletarian discipline among all sections of the working population, shall we be able to solve the historic task now confronting us.

We shall have to overcome vast difficulties. We shall have to gather up all surpluses and stocks, properly distribute them and properly organise their transportation for the needs of tens of millions of people. We shall have to see that the work proceeds with the regularity of clockwork. We shall have to overcome the chaos which is being

fostered by the profiteers and by the sceptics, who are spreading panic. This task of organisation can be accomplished only by the class conscious workers, meeting the practical difficulties face to face. It is worth devoting all our energies to this task; it is worth engaging in this last, decisive fight. And in this fight we shall win.

The recent decrees on the measures taken by the Soviet government show that the path of the proletarian dictatorship will obviously and undoubtedly involve severe trials for every Socialist who seriously considers himself a Socialist.

The recent decrees deal with the fundamental problem of life—bread. They are all inspired by three guiding ideas. The idea of centralisation: uniting everybody for the performance of the common task under the leadership of a centre. We must prove that we are in earnest and not give way to despondency, we must reject any kind of service from the black market petty profiteers and amalgamate all the forces of the proletariat; for in the struggle against the famine, too, we rely on the oppressed classes and we see the solution only in their energetic struggle against all exploiters, in the unification of their activities.

Yes, we are told that the grain monopoly is being undermined by bag-trading and profiteering on every hand. More and more frequently we hear the intellectuals say that the bag-traders are helping us, are feeding us. Yes, but the bag-traders are feeding us in the kulak way: they are acting in a way that would help to establish, strengthen and perpetuate the power of the kulaks, so that those who have power could, with the help of their profits, extend it through various individuals to everybody around. But we assert that if we could unite the forces whose only sin at the present moment is their lack of faith, the fight would be considerably easier. If there ever existed a revolutionary who hoped that we could pass to the socialist system without difficulties, such a revolutionary, such a Socialist, would not be worth a brass farthing.

We know that the transition from capitalism to socialism involves an extremely difficult struggle. But we are prepared to overcome a thousand difficulties, we are prepared to make a thousand attempts; and having made a thousand attempts we shall go on to the next attempt. We are now enlisting all Soviet organisations in a new creative life, we are getting them to rouse new forces. We count on overcoming the new difficulties with the help of new strata, by

organising the poor peasants. And this brings me to the second main task.

I have said that the first idea that runs through all these decrees is that of centralisation. Only by collecting all the grain in one common sack shall we be able to overcome the famine. And even then grain will barely suffice. Nothing is left of Russia's former abundance, and all minds must be deeply imbued with communism, so that everybody should regard surplus grain as the property of the people and be alive to the interests of the toilers. This can be achieved only by the method proposed by the Soviet government.

When they tell us of other methods, we reply as we did at the session of the Central Executive Committee.\* When they talked of other methods, we said: Go to Skoropadsky! Teach them such methods as raising grain prices or forming a bloc with the kulaks. There you will find willing ears. As for the Soviet government, it says only one thing: that the difficulties are immense and one must respond to every difficulty by new efforts of organisation and discipline. Such difficulties cannot be overcome in a single month. There have been cases in the history of nations when decades were devoted to overcoming lesser difficulties, and these have gone down in history as great and fruitful decades. You will never cause us to lose heart by referring to the failures of the first half-year or the first year of this great revolution. We shall continue to follow our old slogan of centralisation, unity and proletarian discipline on a country-wide scale.

When they say to us, as Groman says in his report, that "the detachments you have sent to collect grain are taking to drink and are themselves becoming moonshiners and robbers," we reply that we are fully aware that this is all too frequently the case. We do not conceal such facts, we do not whitewash them, we do not try to evade them by pseudo-Left phrases and intentions. Ay, the working class is not separated by a Chinese wall from the old bourgeois society. And when a revolution takes place, it is not like the death of an individual, when the body of the deceased is simply removed. When the old society perishes, you cannot nail the corpse of bourgeois society into a coffin and lower it into the grave. It disintegrates in our midst; the corpse rots and poisons us.

There has never been, nor can there be, a single great revolution otherwise. What we have to combat in order to preserve and develop

<sup>\*</sup> See pages 15-30 in this volume.—Ed.

the sprouts of the new order in an atmosphere infested with the poison of a decaying corpse—the literature, the political situation, the play of political parties, which from the Cadets to the Mensheviks are infested with these poisons of a decaying corpse—all this they intend to hurl at us, to put a spoke in our wheel. The socialist revolution can never be engendered in any other way; and not a single country can pass from capitalism to socialism except in an atmosphere of disintegrating capitalism and of painful struggle against the system of capitalism.

And so we say that our first slogan is centralisation, and our second slogan is the unity of the workers. Workers, unite and unite again! That is not new, it may not sound sensational or novel. It does not promise the specious successes with which you are being tempted by people like Kerensky—who in August 1917 doubled prices, just as the German bourgeois raised them to twice and even ten times their level—people who promise you direct and immediate successes, provided only you keep on offering new inducements to the kulaks. Of course, we shall not take that road. We say that our second method may be an old method, but it is an eternal one: Unite!

We are in a difficult situation. The Soviet Republic is perhaps passing through one of its most trying periods. New strata of workers will come to our aid. We have no police, we shall not have a special military caste, we have no other apparatus than the conscious unity of the workers. They will save Russia from her desperate plight. The workers must unite, workers' detachments must be organised, the hungry people from the non-agricultural famine-stricken districts must be organised—it is to them we turn for help, it is to them our Commissariat of Food appeals, it is they we call upon to join the crusade for bread, the crusade against the profiteers and the kulaks, and for the restoration of order.

The crusade was a campaign in which physical force was supplemented by a faith which, centuries ago, people were compelled by torture to regard as sacred. But we hope, we think, we are convinced, we know that what the October Revolution has led the advanced workers and the advanced representatives of the poor peasants to regard as sacred is the preservation of their power over the landlords and capitalists. They know that physical force is not enough to influence the masses of the population. We are building a dictatorship, we are applying force against the exploiters, and we cast aside with

contempt all who fail to understand this, so as not to waste words in talking about the form of socialism.

We say that a new historical task is confronting us. We must get the new historical class to understand that we need detachments of agitators from among the workers. We need workers from the many districts of the non-producing provinces. We need them to come from there as conscious advocates of the Soviet government; they must sanctify and legitimise our food war, our war against the kulaks, our war against disorder; they must make possible the spreading of socialist propaganda; they must establish in the countryside the distinction between the poor and rich, which every peasant can understand and which is a tremendous source of strength for us. It is a fountain which it is difficult to get to flow at full pressure, because the exploiters are numerous. And these exploiters resort to the most varied methods of bringing the masses under their sway: bribing the poor peasants by permitting them to make money out of illicit distilling or to make a profit of several rubles on every ruble by selling at profiteering prices. Such are the methods by which the kulaks and the rural bourgeoisie influence the masses!

We cannot blame the poor peasants for this, for we know that they had been enslaved for tens and thousands of years, that they have suffered from serfdom and the system which was bequeathed by serfdom in Russia. We must go to the poor peasants not only with guns directed against the kulaks, but also with the propaganda of enlightened workers who bring the strength of their organisation into the countryside. Poor peasants, unite!—that is our third slogan. This is not making advances to the kulaks, and it is not the senseless method of raising prices. If we were to double prices, they would say: "They are raising prices. They are hungry. Wait a bit, they will raise them still higher."

It is a well-beaten path, this path of playing up to the kulaks and profiteers. It is easy to take this path and to hold out tempting prospects. The intellectuals who call themselves Socialists are quite prepared to paint such prospects for us; and the number of such intellectuals is legion. But we say to you: Those who wish to follow the Soviet government, those who value it and regard it as a government of the toilers, as a government of the exploited class, we call on you to follow another path. This new historical task is a difficult one. To accomplish it we shall have to raise up a new stratum and give a new form of

organisation to those sections of the toilers and exploited who in their majority are downtrodden and ignorant, who are least united and have still to be united.

All over the world the foremost ranks of the workers of the cities, the industrial workers, have united, and united to a man. But scarcely anywhere in the world has a systematic, supreme, and self-sacrificing attempt been made to unite those who are engaged in small-scale agricultural production and, who, living in remote out-of-the-way places and in ignorance, have been stunted by their conditions of life. The task that faces us here unites for one purpose the struggle against the famine and the struggle for the profound and important system of socialism as a whole. The struggle which now confronts us is one worth devoting all our energies to, one which it is worth staking everything for; for it is the fight for socialism.

In this path we shall regard the toiling masses as our allies. Solid achievements await us in this path; not only solid, but also inalienable. That is our third significant slogan.

Such are the three fundamental slogans: centralisation of food work, unity of the proletariat, and organisation of the poor peasants. And our appeal, the appeal of our Food Commissariat to every trade union and factory committee, says: Things are going hard with you, comrades; then help us, join your efforts to ours, punish every violation of order, every evasion of the grain monopoly. It is a difficult task; but fight bag-trading, profiteering and the kulaks, again and again, a hundred times, a thousand times, and we shall win. For this is the path into which the majority of the workers are being led by the whole course of their lives and by the severity of our failures and trials in the matter of food supply. They know that whereas when there was still no absolute shortage of grain in Russia the defects of the food supply organisations were made good by individual and isolated actions, this can no longer be the case now. Only the joint effort and the unity of those who are suffering most in the hungry cities and provinces can help us. That is the path the Soviet government is calling on you to follow—the unity of the workers, of their vanguard, for the purpose of carrying on agitation in the localities, and of waging a war for grain on the kulaks.

According to the calculations of the most cautious experts, not far from Moscow, in nearby provinces—Kursk, Orel and Tambov—there is still a surplus of about ten million poods of grain. We are very

far from being able to collect this surplus for the common state fund. Let us set about this task more vigorously. Let an enlightened worker go to every factory where despair is temporarily gaining sway, and where, driven by hunger, people are ready to accept the specious slogans of those who would have us revert to the methods of Kerensky, to an increase of the fixed prices, and let him say: "We see people who are despairing of the Soviet government. Join our detachments of militant agitators. Do not be dismayed by the many cases in which these detachments have become demoralised and succumbed to drink. We shall use every such example to show, not that the working class is not fit, but that the working class has still not rid itself of the shortcomings of the old, predatory society and cannot rid itself of them all at once. Let us unite our efforts, let us form dozens of detachments, let us combine their activities, and in this way get rid of our

Allow me in conclusion to draw your attention to some of the telegrams which are being received by the Council of People's Commissars and particularly by our Food Commissariat.

shortcomings."

In this matter of the food crisis, of the torments of hunger that are afflicting all our cities, we observe, as the proverb says, that ill tidings travel fast. I should therefore like to read to you certain documents which were received by the organs and institutions of the Soviet government after the issue of the decree of May 13 on the food dictatorship, in which it is stated that we continue to rely only on the proletariat. The telegrams indicate that in the localities they are already proceeding to organise the crusade against the kulaks, to organise the poor peasants, as we proposed. The telegrams we have received are proof of this.

Let them shout from the housetops, let the raucous voice of the Cherevanins and the Gromans sow panic and demand the destruction and abolition of the Soviet government! Those who are on the job will be the least disturbed by this; they will examine the facts, they will see that the work is progressing and that new ranks are forming and uniting.

A new form of struggle against the kulaks is arising—an alliance of the poor peasants who need assistance and who need to be united. It is proposed that bonuses be given for deliveries of grain, and we must help. We are willing to give such bonuses to the poor peasants, and we have already begun to do so. But the kulaks, the criminals

who are subjecting the population to the torments of hunger, and on account of whom tens of millions of people are suffering, towards them we shall use force. We shall give every possible inducement to the poor peasants, for they are entitled to it. The poor peasant has for the first time obtained access to the good things of life, and we see that he is living more meagrely than the workers. We shall give every possible inducement to the poor peasants and will help them if they help us to organise the collection of grain, to secure grain from the kulaks. We must spare no effort in order to make that a reality in Russia.

We have already adopted this course, and it will be still further developed by the experience of every enlightened worker and by the new detachments.

The work has been started and is progressing. We do not expect dazzling success, but success there certainly will be. We know that we are now entering a period of new dislocation, the most severe and difficult period of the revolution. We are not in the least surprised that counter-revolution is raising its head, that the number of waverers and despairers in our ranks is growing. We say: Cease your vacillations; abandon your despair, the bourgeoisie will take advantage of this, as it is to its interest to sow panic; get to work; with our food decrees and our plan based on the support of the poor peasants we are on the only right road. In the face of the new historic tasks we call upon you once again to make a new exertion of effort. This task is an infinitely difficult one, but, I repeat, it is an extremely gratifying one. We are here fighting for the basis of communist distribution, for the actual creation of the firm foundations of communist society. Let us all set to work together. We shall vanquish the famine and achieve socialism.

### REPLY TO THE DISCUSSION

Comrades, the speeches of the representatives of the various parties have, in my opinion, shown what might have been expected.

Notwithstanding the differences that exist between the Bolsheviks and certain other parties and groups, we have convinced ourselves that the tremendous enthusiasm of the masses is uniting our forces in the struggle against the famine, and uniting not only the Bolshevik organisations alone. And we have no doubts that the further the struggle against the famine proceeds and the more the counter-revolu-

tionaries, hiding behind the Czechoslovak \* and other bands, show their faces, the more active will be the process of dissociation of the supporters of the Bolsheviks—the workers and the labouring peasant masses—from those enemies, whatever they may call themselves, whose arguments we are disputing.

These enemies are continuing to use the old, hackneyed arguments about the Brest-Litovsk Peace and the civil war, as though during the three months since the Brest-Litovsk Peace was concluded, events have not convincingly borne out the views of those who said that only the tactics of the Communists can bring the people peace and leave them free for the work of organising and uniting their forces in preparation for the new and great wars which are now about to take place, this time under different conditions. The events fully show that the European proletariat, which at that time was not yet in a position to come to our aid, is now with every month—this can be said today without exaggeration—approaching the point when the necessity for revolt will be fully realised and revolt become inevitable. Events have fully shown that we had only one choice—to accept this peace which we call coercive and predatory.

Every thinking man felt that the resolution moved by the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries at the Third Congress of Soviets was counter-revolutionary; and every thinking man must feel the same about the resolution of the Mensheviks, who to this day keep crying, "Down with the Brest-Litovsk Peacel" and who pretend they really do not know that in doing so they want to embroil us in a war with the German bourgeoisie through the Czechoslovak mutineers and agents hired for the purpose.

It is not worth while dwelling on the accusations that the Communists are responsible for the famine. We had the same thing during the October Revolution. No Socialist or Anarchist, call him what you will, who has not taken leave of his senses will venture to get up at any meeting and assert that socialism can be reached without civil war.

You may examine all the publications of all the more or less responsible Socialist parties, factions and groups, and you will not find a single responsible and serious Socialist saying anything so absurd as that socialism can ever come about except through civil war, or that the landlords and capitalists will voluntarily surrender their

<sup>\*</sup> See note 4 on page 535.—Ed.

privileges. That would be naive to the point of stupidity. And now, after the bourgeoisie and its supporters have suffered a number of defeats, we hear admissions like that of Bogayevsky, for example, who, on the Don, had the best soil in Russia for counter-revolution, but who has also admitted that the majority of the people were against them—and therefore no subversive activities of the bourgeoisie could avail them without the aid of foreign bayonets. Yet the Bolsheviks are being attacked here for the civil war. That is tantamount to going over to the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie, no matter what slogans are used to mask the fact.

As before the revolution, so now, we say that when international capital throws war into the scales of history, when hundreds of thousands of people are perishing, and when war is remoulding people's habits and accustoming them to settle issues by armed force, to think that we can emerge from the war in any other way than by converting it into a civil war is more than strange. And what is brewing in Austria, in Italy, in Germany shows that civil war in those countries will assume even keener forms, will be even more acute. There is no other way for socialism; and whoever wages war on socialism betrays socialism completely.

As to food measures, it has been said that I have not dwelt on them in detail. But that was not part of my task. The report on the food question has been made by my colleagues, who have been working on that problem, and doing so not for months but for years, studying it not only in the offices of Petrograd and Moscow, but in the localities, and making a practical study of how to store grain, how to fit up the granaries, and so on. These reports were made to the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and to the Moscow Soviet, and you will find the material on the subject in these reports.

As to business-like criticism and practical recommendations, that was no part of my task. My task was to outline the principles of the problem that faces us, and I have not heard here any criticism worthy of any attention or any sensible objection worthy of examination from the standpoint of principle. And let me say in conclusion that I am convinced, in fact I am sure, that this will be the conviction of the vast majority, for the purpose of our meeting is not to adopt a definite resolution—although, of course, that too is important, because it shows that the proletariat is capable of uniting its forces; but

that is not enough, it is very, very far from enough—what we have to do now is to tackle practical problems.

We know, and our worker comrades know it especially, that at every step in practical life, in every factory, at every meeting, at every chance gathering in the streets, this same question of the famine is brought up, and in ever more acute forms. And therefore our chief task should be to make this meeting, too—this meeting with representatives from the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, the Moscow Soviet and the trade unions—the starting point for a radical change in all our practical work. Everything else must be entirely subordinated to the success of our propaganda, agitation and organising work in combating famine; this must be put before everything else and completely merged with the proletarian and ruthlessly firm war on the kulaks and profiteers.

Our Food Commissariat has already appealed to the factory committees, the trade unions and the big proletarian centres which are the immediate seats of our activities, to those close and numerous links which unite the Moscow workers with hundreds of thousands of organised factory workers in all the big industrial districts.

All the more must we make use of them.

The situation is critical. Famine is not only threatening, it is already upon us. Every worker, every party functionary must at once make it his practical job to change the fundamental trend of his activities.

All out into the factories, among the masses! All out to tackle the practical job at once! This will give us a host of practical suggestions of far more fertile methods, and at the same time will help single out and promote new forces. With the aid of these new forces we shall launch the work on a broad scale, and we are firmly convinced that the three months—of which Comrade Trotsky so truly said that they will be far more difficult than the preceding ones—will serve to steel our forces and will lead us to complete victory over famine and help to realise all the plans of the Soviet government.

#### DRAFT RESOLUTION

This joint meeting draws the attention of all workers and toiling peasants to the fact that the famine which has overtaken many parts of the country demands of us the most vigorous and determined measures to combat the calamity.

The enemies of the Soviet system, the landlords, capitalists and kulaks and their numerous satellites, want to take advantage of the calamity to engineer revolts, aggravate the chaos and disorder, overthrow the Soviet government, resurrect the old system of servitude and slavery for the working people, and restore the power of the landlords and capitalists, as has been done in the Ukraine.

Only the utmost exertion of all the efforts of the working class and the toiling peasantry can save the country from famine and safeguard the gains of the revolution from the attacks of the exploiting classes.

This joint meeting considers that the firm policy pursued by the Soviet government in combating the famine is an absolutely correct policy and the only correct one.

Only the strictest revolutionary order in every sphere of activity, and especially on the railways and in the water transport system, only the strictest discipline among the workers, and their self-sacrificing aid in the form of detachments of agitators and fighters against the bourgeoisie and the kulaks, and only the independent organisation of the poor peasants can save the country and the revolution.

This joint meeting urgently appeals to all workers and peasants to set about this work, and by concerted and united effort vanquish chaos, disorder and unco-ordinated effort.

Report to joint meeting of Central Executive Committee, Moscow Soviet, and trade union representatives, June 4, 1918.

Published in Report of the Fourth All-Russian Central Executive Committee, 1918.

## THE TEACHERS AND THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT

LENIN greeted the congress <sup>3</sup> on behalf of the Council of People's Commissars and said that the teachers, who at first were rather slow in making up their minds to work under the Soviet government, were now growing more and more convinced that such collaboration is essential. Such cases of conversion from opponents into supporters of the Soviet government are very numerous among other sections of society too.

The army of teachers must set themselves tremendous tasks in the educational sphere, and to begin with must form the main army of socialist education. Life and knowledge must be liberated from the sway of capital, from the yoke of the bourgeoisie. The teachers must not confine themselves to narrow pedagogical duties. They must join forces with the entire body of the embattled working people. The task of the new pedagogy is to link up teaching activities with the socialist organisation of society.

It must be said that the majority of the intellectuals of old Russia are downright opponents of the Soviet régime, and there is little doubt that it will be by no means easy to overcome the difficulties this creates. The process of fermentation among the broad mass of the teachers has only just begun. No school teacher who has the people sincerely at heart can confine his efforts to organising a national teachers' union. He must confidently carry his propaganda among the masses. This road will lead to a joint struggle of the proletariat and the teachers for the victory of socialism.

Minutes of speech delivered at National Congress of Internationalist Teachers, June 5, 1918.

Published in Handbook of the National Union of Internationalist Teachers, No. 1, Moscow, July, 1918.

## THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

OUR party has decided to hold today as many public meetings as possible in Moscow with the object of calling the attention of the working class to the situation of the Soviet government and to the efforts it will have to make in order to cope successfully with the present situation.

You know that in these past few months, and even weeks, counterrevolution has raised its head. The Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks are accusing the Soviet government of betraying Russia to the German imperialists.

However, we are all perfectly aware of what has been taking place in the Caucasus, where the Caucasian Mensheviks have concluded an alliance with the Turkish imperialists, and in the Ukraine, where the Ukrainian Right Socialist-Revolutionaries have concluded an alliance with the German imperialists. And what is more, not only have they reduced all the achievements of the Soviet regime to naught in these regions, not only are they arresting and shooting workers, not only have they deprived them of all their gains, but they have even set a Skoropadsky in the saddle. These measures, of course, will not win them the sympathy of the working class. That is why the counter-revolutionaries are now trying to make the most of the fatigue of the Russian people, of the famine. They are making a last attempt to overthrow the Soviet government.

Now they are clutching at the Czechoslovaks, who, it should be said, are by no means hostile to the Soviet government. It is not the Czechoslovaks, but their counter-revolutionary officers who are hostile to the Soviet government. With the help of these officers, the imperialists are trying to drag Russia into the world slaughter which is still going on.

And it is a characteristic thing that wherever the power passes into

the hands of the Mensheviks and the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, we at once find that they want to gladden us with some Skoropadsky or other. And as soon as the masses realise where the Mensheviks and Right Socialist-Revolutionaries have led them, the latter are left without the support of the masses.

They are left without support. Then, as a last hope, they begin to speculate on famine, and when that too fails, they do not even shrink from nefarious assassination.

You all know that Comrade Volodarsky,\* an old party worker, who paid for his convictions by suffering and hardships, has been assassinated. It is quite possible of course that they may succeed in assassinating a few more active members of the Soviet government, but that will only serve to anchor it in the affections of the masses and rouse us to cling even more firmly to our gains.

Today there are two factors which render the position of the Soviet Republic particularly grave: famine and the international situation.

The international situation is grave because the German, French and British imperialists are only waiting for an opportune moment to fling themselves once more on the Soviet Republic. The task of our party is to throw off the yoke of capitalism; this can only be done by an international revolution. But, you must realise that revolutions are not made to order. We realise that the position of the Russian republic is such that the Russian working class has been the first to succeed in throwing off the yoke of capital and of the bourgeoisie, and we realise that it succeeded in this, not because it is more advanced and ideal than others, but because our country is a most backward one.

Capitalism will be finally overthrown when at least a few countries join in this assault. And we know that in all countries—in spite of a most rigorous censorship, we have succeeded this much—at all meetings the mere mention of the Communist Party and of the Russian Republic evokes an outburst of enthusiasm.

And we say that as long as the world carnage continues over there in the West, we are secure. Whatever the consequences of the war may be, it is bound to call forth revolution, which will be, and is, our ally.

After describing the grave position of Soviet Russia, surrounded as it is by enemies without and attacked by counter-revolution at home, Lenin passed to the subject of the famine.

<sup>•</sup> Prominent Bolshevik speaker and popular leader of Petrograd workers.—Ed.

Our revolution strikes terror into the imperialist classes, for they clearly perceive that their existence depends on whether their capitalism manages to hold on or not. We must therefore stand fast and march shoulder to shoulder with the class with which we won the October Revolution.

It is with this same class that we are marching in the fight against the famine.

For one, one and a half or two months—the most difficult of all—we must now exert all our strength and energies.

There have been moments in the lives of nations before now when the state power passed into the hands of the working class; but it was never able to retain it. We, however, can retain it, for we have our Soviet government uniting a working class that has taken its cause into its own hands.

However grave our position may be, whatever plots the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Czechoslovaks may hatch, we know that there is grain available even in the provinces surrounding the capital. And we must secure this grain by preserving and strengthening the alliance between the working class and the poor peasants.

Detachments of Red Army men leave the capital with the best intentions in the world, but, on arriving at their destination, they sometimes succumb to the temptations of bribery and drink. For this we have to blame the four years of carnage, which kept men in the trenches for so long and compelled them to slaughter each other like wild beasts. This bestiality is to be observed in all countries. Years will pass before men cease to act like beasts and resume human shape.

We appeal to the workers to let us have men.

When I read a report that in the Usman district, Tambov province, a food detachment turned over to the poor peasants three thousand of the six thousand poods of grain it had requisitioned, I declare that even if one were to prove to me that to this day there has been only one such detachment in Russia, I would still say that the Soviet government is doing its job. For in no other country in the world will you find such a detachment!

The bourgeoisie is fully conscious of its interests and is doing its utmost to safeguard them. It knows that if this autumn, for the first time in many centuries, the peasants reap the fruits of their own labour—a crop—and keep the working class of the towns supplied, all its hopes of restoration will collapse and the Soviet government will be

strong. That is why the bourgeoisie is now displaying such feverish activity.

We must bend all our efforts to combat the rich peasants, the profiteers and the urban bourgeoisie.

One of the greatest drawbacks of our revolution is the timidity of our workers, who are still convinced that the only people capable of governing the state are their betters—their betters in the art of robbery.

But there are fine workers in every mill and factory. No matter if they do not belong to the party—you must weld them together and unite them, and the state will do everything in its power to help them in their difficult work.

Newspaper account of speech at a Moscow meeting, June 21, 1918.

Izvestia, Nos. 127 (391) and 128 (392), June 22 and 23, 1918.

# THE ORGANISATION OF FOOD DETACHMENTS

AS it is too late to send a delegate to the congress from the Food Commissariat, I would ask you to bring the following to the attention of the congress. Delegates to the congress who support the Soviet government should remember, firstly, that the grain monopoly is being carried out simultaneously with a monopoly on textiles and on other principal articles of general consumption. Secondly, the demand for the abolition of the grain monopoly is a political move on the part of the counter-revolutionary sections, who are endeavouring to wrench from the grasp of the revolutionary proletariat the system of monopoly regulation of prices, one of the most important implements for the gradual transition from capitalist exchange of commodities to socialist exchange of products. Explain to the congress that as a method of combating the famine the abolition of the monopoly would be not only useless but would be harmful, as is shown by the Ukraine, where Skoropadsky abolished the grain monopoly and as a result profiteering in grain within a few days reached such fantastic proportions that the Ukrainian proletariat is now suffering from hunger even more acutely than under the monopoly.

Point out that the only effective method of increasing bread rations is contained in the decision of the Council of People's Commissars forcibly to requisition grain from the kulaks and to distribute it among the poor in town and country. This requires that the poor shall more rapidly and resolutely enlist in the food army which is being created by the People's Food Commissariat.

Propose that the congress immediately undertake agitation among the workers to enlist in the food army formed by the Soviet of Deputies of Penza and to abide by the following rules:

1. Every factory shall provide one person for every twenty-five workers.

- 2. Registration of those desiring to enlist in the food army shall be conducted by the factory committees, which shall draw up in two copies a list of the mobilised, one of which shall be forwarded to the People's Food Commissariat and the other retained.
- 3. To the list shall be attached a testimonial from the factory committee, or the trade union organisation, or a Soviet body, or responsible representatives of Soviet institutions, vouching for the personal integrity and revolutionary discipline of each candidate. The selection of men for the food army must be so made that not a single blemish shall subsequently attach to the names of those who are setting out for the villages to combat the handful of kulak robbers for the purpose of saving millions of working people from starvation.

Comrade workers, only if this condition is observed will it be obvious to all that the requisition of grain from the kulaks is not robbery, but the revolutionary duty of the worker and peasant masses who are fighting for socialism!

- 4. In every factory those mobilised shall elect a representative from their midst to attend to all the organisational steps necessary for the actual enrolment of the candidates of the factory as members of the food army of the People's Commissariat.
- 5. Those enrolled in the army shall receive their former pay as well as food and equipment from the date of actual enlistment.
- 6. Those enrolled in the army shall promise unreservedly to obey the instructions given by the People's Food Commissariat to the detachments when they leave for their destinations and shall be subordinate to the commissars of the detachments.

I am certain that if convinced Socialists loyal to the October Revolution are placed at the head of the food requisition detachments, they will be able to organise Committees of Poor Peasants and together with them succeed in taking grain from the kulaks even without resorting to armed force.

Telegram, June 27, 1918.

Published in Izvestia Narodnovo Komissariata Prodovolstvia, No. 10-11, 1918.

## THE CURRENT SITUATION

COMRADES, you all know, of course, of the great calamity that has befallen our country, the famine. Before discussing measures of combating this calamity, which has now become more acute than ever, we must first of all discuss its main causes. In discussing this question we must say and bear in mind that this is a calamity that has befallen not only Russia, but all, even the most cultured, advanced and civilised countries.

In Russia, where the overwhelming majority of the peasantry were disunited and oppressed by the tsars, the landlords and the capitalists, famine has time and again afflicted whole regions of our agrarian country. This was true of past decades, and it is true especially now, during the revolution. But this calamity reigns in the West European countries also. For decades and even centuries, many of these countries have not known what famine is, so highly developed was agriculture, and so fully assured of an enormous quantity of imported grain were those European countries which could not produce a sufficient supply of grain. Yet, now, in the twentieth century, side by side with still greater progress in technology, side by side with wonderful inventions, side by side with the wide use of machinery and electricity, of modern internal combustion engines in agriculture, side by side with all this we find this same calamity-famine-advancing upon the people in all European countries without exception. It would seem that with civilisation, with culture, countries are once again reverting to primitive barbarism, are once again in a situation when morals deteriorate and people are bestialised by the struggle for a crust of bread.

What has caused this reversion to barbarism in a number of European countries, in the majority of them? We all know that it was caused by the imperialist war, by the war which has been torturing

humanity for four years, which has already cost the peoples more, far more, than ten million young lives, a war which was called forth by the avaricious capitalists, and which is being waged to decide which of the great robbers—the British or the German—shall rule the world, acquire colonies and strangle small nations.

This war, which has spread to almost the whole globe and has destroyed not less than ten million lives, not counting the millions of maimed, crippled and sick; which, in addition, has torn millions of the healthiest and best forces from productive labour, has reduced humanity to a state of absolute barbarism. What many Socialist writers foresaw as the worst, most painful and distressful end of capitalism has come to pass. They said: Capitalist society, based on the usurpation by a handful of capitalists, of monopolists, of the land, the factories and tools as their private property, will be transformed into socialist society. This alone is capable of putting an end to war, because the "civilised," "cultured" capitalist world is heading for an unprecedented crash, which is liable to undermine, and inevitably will undermine, all the foundations of cultured life.

I repeat, we see famine not only in Russia, but in such cultured, advanced countries as Germany, where the productivity of labour is incomparably higher; a country which can supply the world with an abundance of machinery, and, still maintaining free intercourse with remote countries, can supply her population with food. The famine there is incomparably better organised, it is spread over a longer period than in Russia, but actually it is far more severe and harrowing than here. Capitalism is heading towards such a severe and painful crash that it is now perfectly clear to all that the present war cannot end without a number of extremely severe and bloody revolutions, of which the Russian Revolution was only the first, only the beginning.

You are now learning that in Vienna, for example, a Council of Workers' Deputies has been established for the second time, and for the second time the working population have come out in an almost general mass strike. We hear that in cities like Berlin, which up to now have been models of capitalist order, culture and civilisation, it is becoming dangerous to go out into the street after dark. Despite the severest penalties and the strictest guard, war and famine have reduced people even there to a state of absolute savagery, have led to such anarchy, have roused such anger, that not merely profiteering, but

downright looting, an actual war for a crust of bread, is becoming the order of the day in all cultured and civilised countries.

If we are witnessing in our country a painful and difficult situation as a consequence of the famine, we must explain to the few but nevertheless still existing purblind and ignorant people the fundamental and principal causes of the famine. One may still meet people in our country who argue in this way: Under the Tsar at least we had bread; but now the revolution has come and we have no bread. Naturally, it is quite possible that for some old village women the development of history during the past ten years is entirely summed up in the fact that formerly there was bread and now there is none. That is natural, because famine is a calamity which sweeps away all other questions, brushes them aside, becomes the sole arbiter, and overshadows everything else. But is goes without saying that our task, the task of the class conscious workers, is to explain to the broad masses, to explain to every representative of the toiling masses in town and country the principal cause of the famine. For, unless we explain this, we shall not be able to create a proper attitude either among ourselves or among the representatives of the toiling masses, we shall not be able to create a proper understanding of the harm it is causing, and we shall not be able to create that firm determination and temper that are required to combat this calamity. But if we bear in mind that this calamity was caused by the imperialist war, that today even the richest countries are experiencing an unprecedented famine, and that the overwhelming majority of the toiling masses are suffering incredible torments; if we bear in mind that for four years now this imperialist war has been forcing the workers of the various countries to shed their blood for the benefit and greedy profit of capitalists, and if we bear in mind that the longer the war lasts, the more hopeless it becomes, we will understand what gigantic and immense forces have to be set in motion.

The war has already lasted nearly four years. Russia came out of the war, and, because she came out of it alone, she finds herself between two gangs of imperialist pirates, each of whom is rending her, strangling her, taking advantage of her temporarily defenceless and unarmed condition. The war has already lasted four years. The German imperialist pirates have achieved a number of victories and continue to deceive their workers, a section of whom, bribed by the bourgeoisie, have deserted to its side and repeat the despicable and bloody lie about

the defence of the fatherland. As a matter of fact the German soldiers are defending the selfish and predatory interests of the German capitalists who promise them that Germany will bring peace and prosperity, when actually we find that the more extensive Germany's victories are, the more the hopelessness of her position is revealed.

When the coercive, exploiters' Brest-Litovsk Peace, a peace based upon violence and the oppression of nations, was being concluded. Germany, the German capitalists, boasted that they would give the workers bread and peace. But now they are cutting down the bread ration in Germany. It is universally admitted that the food campaign in the rich Ukraine was a failure.\* In Austria things have again reached the pitch of hunger riots, of nationwide mass outbursts of indignation, because the more Germany is victorious the clearer it becomes to all, even to many representatives of the big bourgeoisie in Germany, that the war is hopeless. They are beginning to realise that even if the Germans are able to maintain their resistance on the Western front, it will not bring the end of the war a bit nearer, but will create yet another enslaved country which will have to be occupied by German troops. The war will have to be continued and demoralisation will increase in the German army, which is being transformed from an army into a gang of looters, violating other peoples—unarmed peoples—and extracting from their countries the last remnants of food and raw materials in the face of tremendous resistance of the population. The closer Germany approaches the borders of Europe the clearer it becomes that she must cope with England and America, which are far more developed than she is, have greater productive forces, and find the time to dispatch tens of thousands of the best new forces to Europe, and to convert all their machines, factories and works into instruments of destruction.

The war is beginning anew, and that means that every year, nay, every month, sees the further extension of this war. There is no other way out of this war except revolution, civil war, the transformation of the war between capitalists for profits, for the division of loot, for the strangulation of small countries, into a war of the oppressed against the oppressors, the only struggle which always, in history, accompanies not only war but every revolution of any importance, the only war that

<sup>\*</sup> During the German occupation of Ukraine, the subservient government failed to supply the required amount of food because of the guerrilla warfare carried on by Ukrainian workers and peasants.—Ed.

is legitimate, just, and holy, from the point of view of the interests of the toilers, of the oppressed and exploited masses. Without such a war there can be no liberation from imperialist slavery.

We must be perfectly clear in our minds about the new disasters that civil war entails for every country. The higher the culture of a country, the more serious these disasters will be. Let us picture to ourselves a country with machines and railways a prey to civil war, which cuts off communication between its various regions. Picture to yourselves the condition of regions which for decades have been adapted to live by the interchange of manufactured goods, and you will understand that every civil war involves fresh and terrible disasters, which the great Socialists in fact foresaw. The imperialists doom the working class to hardships, suffering and death. Burdensome and painful as all this may be for the whole of mankind, it is becoming clearer and clearer every day to the new socialist society that the imperialists will not be able to put an end to the war they have started, but that other classes will end it—the working class, which in all countries is becoming more and more active every day, is expressing its anger and indignation and, quite apart from sentiments and moods, is being compelled by circumstances to overthrow the rule of the capitalists.

We in Russia, at a time when the hardships of famine are particularly felt, are passing through a period more difficult than has ever fallen to the lot of a revolution before, and we cannot count on immediate aid from our West-European comrades. The whole burden of the Russian revolution lies in the fact that although it was much easier for the Russian revolutionary working class to start, than for the West-European classes, it is more difficult for us to continue. Over there, in the West-European countries, it is more difficult to start revolutions because there the revolutionary proletariat has to contend with the highest achievements of culture, while the working class is in a state of cultural slavery.

Meanwhile, if only because of our international position, we must pass through an incredibly difficult period; and we, the representatives of the toiling masses, the workers, the class-conscious workers, must explain in all our agitation and propaganda, in every speech we deliver, in every appeal we issue, in all our talks in the factories and at every meeting with peasants, that the calamity which had befallen us is an international calamity, and that there is no way out of it except inter-

national revolution. Since we must pass through such a painful period in which we temporarily stand alone, it is necessary to exert all our efforts to bear the difficulties of this period staunchly, knowing that in the last analysis we are not alone, that the hardships we are experiencing are creeping upon every European country, and that not one of these countries will find a way of escape without a series of revolutions.

Russia is in the grip of a famine which has been made the more acute because a coercive peace has deprived her of the most fertile grain-bearing provinces, and also because the old harvest year is drawing to a close. We still have several weeks to go before the next harvest, which will undoubtedly be a rich one. These few weeks will therefore be an exceedingly difficult period of transition which, being a difficult one generally, has been rendered even more acute by the fact that in Russia the deposed exploiting classes of landlords and capitalists are doing all they can, are exerting every effort, to attempt once again to restore their power. This is one of the main reasons why it is precisely the grain-bearing provinces of Siberia which have been cut off from us as a result of the Czechoslovak revolt. But we know very well that the Czechoslovak soldiers are declaring to the representatives of our troops and of our workers and peasants that they do not want to fight Russia and the Russian Soviet government, that they only want to make their way, arms in hand, to the frontier. But at their head stand yesterday's generals, landlords and capitalists, financed with British and French money and enjoying the support of the Russian social-traitors who have deserted to the side of the bourgeoisie.

This whole merry gang is taking advantage of the famine to make one more attempt to restore the landlords and the capitalists to power. The experience of our revolution confirms the correctness of the words which have always distinguished the representatives of scientific socialism, Marx and his followers, from the utopian Socialists, from the petty-bourgeois Socialists, from the Socialist intellectuals, from the Socialist dreamers. The intellectualist dreamers, the petty-bourgeois Socialists, thought, and perhaps still think and dream, that socialism can be introduced by persuasion. They think that the majority of the people will be convinced, and once they are convinced the minority will obey; the majority will vote and socialism will be introduced. No, the world is not built so happily; the exploiters, the brutal landlords, the capitalist class, are not amenable to persuasion. The socialist revolution confirms what everybody has seen—the furious resistance of the

exploiters. The stronger the pressure of the oppressed classes, the nearer they come to overthrowing all oppression, all exploitation; and the more determinedly the oppressed peasantry and the oppressed workers display initiative, the more furious does the resistance of the exploiters become.

We are passing through that very severe and painful period of transition from capitalism to socialism, a period which will inevitably be a long one, a very long one in all countries, because, I repeat, the oppressors retaliate to every success of the oppressed class by fresh attempts at resistance, by fresh attempts to overthrow the power of the oppressed class. The Czechoslovak mutiny, which is obviously being supported by British and French imperialism in the pursuit of its policy of overthrowing the Soviet government, illustrates what this resistance can mean. We see how this mutiny is naturally spreading as an effect of the famine. It goes without saying that among the broad masses of the working people there are many (you know this particularly well; every one of you sees it in the factories) who are not enlightened Socialists and cannot be such because they have had to slave in factories and have had neither the time nor the opportunity to become Socialists. It goes without saying that these people sympathise when they see the workers rising in the factories, when they see these workers getting the opportunity to learn the job of managing factories themselves—a difficult and hard job, in which mistakes are inevitable, but the only one in which the workers can at last realise their constant ambition to make the machines, the mills and factories, the best of modern technique, the finest achievements of humanity serve, not for the purpose of exploitation, but for the purpose of improving and easing the lives of the overwhelming majority. But when the workers see the imperialist pirates in the west, the north and the east taking advantage of Russia's defencelessness to rend the soul from her body, and since they do not yet know what will come of the labour movement in other countries, of course, they are governed by despair. Nor can it be otherwise. It would be ridiculous to expect, and foolish to think, that a complete appreciation of the inevitability of socialism and an understanding of it could spring at one stroke from capitalist society based on exploitation. That cannot be. This appreciation comes only gradually, only at the end, and only by the struggle which has to be waged in this painful period—a period in which one revolution has taken the lead of the rest and gets no assistance from

them, and when famine is looming. Naturally, certain sections of the working people are inevitably overcome by despair and indignation and are ready to chuck up everything in disgust. And, naturally, the counter-revolutionaries, the landlords and capitalists, and their abettors and accomplices, are taking advantage of this for the purpose of launching attack after attack upon the socialist regime.

We see what this has led to in those places where no assistance was rendered by foreign bayonets. We know that it was possible to defeat the Soviets only when those who had shouted so much about defending the fatherland and about their patriotism revealed their capitalist nature and concluded agreements, one day with the German bayonets in order jointly with them to massacre the Ukrainian Bolsheviks, the next day with the Turkish bayonets in order to march against the Bolsheviks, and the day after that with the Czechoslovak bayonets in order to overthrow the Soviet government and massacre Bolsheviks in Samara. Only foreign aid, only the aid of foreign bayonets, only the sale of Russia to Japanese, German and Turkish bayonets, have up to now given some show of success to the compromisers, capitalists and landlords. But we know that when rebellions of this sort, due to starvation and the despair of the masses, broke out in districts where the aid of foreign bayonets could not be called in, as was the case in Saratov, Kozlov and Tambov, the duration of the rule of the landlords, the capitalists and their friends, who camouflaged themselves with the beautiful slogans of the Constituent Assembly, was measured in days, if not in hours. The further the units of the Soviet army were from the centre temporarily in the hands of the counter-revolutionaries, the more determined was the movement among the urban workers, the more these workers and the peasants displayed their initiative in marching to the aid of Saratov, Penza and Kozlov and in immediately overthrowing the counter-revolutionary rule which had been established there.

If you examine these events from the point of view of all that is taking place in world history, if you bear in mind that your task, our common task, is to explain to yourselves and to try to explain to the masses that these great misfortunes have not befallen us accidentally, but, first, as a result of the imperialist war, and, second, as a result of the furious resistance of the landlords, the capitalists, the exploiters; if we are clear about this we can be certain that, however difficult it may be, the full appreciation of this truth will sink deeper and deeper

into the minds of the broad masses and we shall succeed in creating discipline, in overcoming indiscipline in our factories, and in helping the people to live through this painful and particularly difficult period, which may perhaps last only a month or two—the few weeks that still remain until the new harvest.

You know that as a consequence of the Czechoslovak counterrevolutionary mutiny which has cut us off from Siberia, as a consequence of the continuous unrest in the South, as a consequence of the war, the situation in Russia today is very difficult. But it goes without saying that the more difficult the situation of the country, in which famine is looming, the more resolute and determined must be the measures we adopt to combat this famine. The principal measure is the establishment of the grain monopoly. In this connection you all know perfectly well from your own experience that the kulaks, the rich, are raising a howl against the grain monopoly at every step. This is understandable, for in those places where the grain monopoly was temporarily abolished, as Skoropadsky abolished it in Kiev, profiteering has reached unprecedented dimensions, and the price of a pood of grain has risen to two hundred rubles. Naturally, when there is a shortage of an article without which it is impossible to live, every owner of the article can grow rich and prices may rise to unparalleled heights. Naturally, the horror, the panic created by the fear of death from starvation force prices up sky high, and in Kiev they have had to think of restoring the monopoly. Notwithstanding the abundance of grain in the country, here in Russia, long ago, even before the Bolsheviks came into power, the government was driven to the conviction that a grain monopoly was essential. Only the very ignorant, or those who have sold themselves outright to the interests of the moneybags, can be opposed to it.

But when we speak of the grain monopoly we must think of the enormous difficulties of practical realisation that are contained in these words. It is easy to say "grain monopoly"; but we must understand what it means. It means that all surplus grain belongs to the state; it means that every single pood of grain over and above what is required by the peasant for his household, over and above what he requires to maintain his family and his cattle and for sowing, every surplus pood of grain must be taken for the state.

How is this to be done? The state must fix prices; every surplus pood of grain must be located and brought in. How can the peasant,

whose mind has been stultified for hundreds of years, who has been robbed and beaten to stupefaction by the landlords and capitalists and never allowed him to eat his fill, how can this peasant learn to appreciate in a few weeks or a few months what the grain monopoly means? How can scores of millions of people who up to now have known the state only by its oppression, its coercion, by the tyranny and robbery of the government officials, how can these peasants, cast away in remote villages and doomed to pauperdom, be expected to know what the rule of the workers and peasants means, be made to understand that power is in the hands of the poor, that to possess surplus grain and not hand it over to the state is a crime, and that those who hoard surplus grain are robbers, exploiters who are guilty of causing terrible starvation among the workers of Petrograd, Moscow and other cities? How can the peasant know these things, considering that up to now he has been kept in ignorance and that his only concern in the village was to sell his grain? How can he know these things? It is not surprising that when we examine this question more from the point of view of practical life, we realise what an enormously difficult task it is to introduce a grain monopoly in a country in which tsardom and the landlords have kept the majority of the peasants in ignorance, in a country in which the peasantry have sown grain on their own land for the first time in many centuries.

But the more difficult this task is, the more difficult it appears to be after close and careful study, the more clearly must we say to ourselves what we have always said: that the emancipation of the workers must be the act of the workers themselves. We have always said that the emancipation of the toilers from oppression cannot be brought about from outside; the toilers themselves, by their struggle, by their movement, by their agitation, must learn to solve the new historical problem; and the more difficult and the greater and more responsible the new historical problem is, the larger must be the number of people who should be enlisted in their millions to take an independent part in solving it. No class consciousness, no organisation is required to sell grain to a merchant, to a dealer. To do that one must live as the bourgeoisie has ordered: one must merely be an obedient slave and picture to oneself and agree that the world as built by the bourgeoisie is magnificent. But in order to overcome capitalist chaos, in order to realise the grain monopoly, in order to

ensure that every surplus pood of grain belongs to the state, prolonged, difficult and hard organisational work must be carried on, not by organisers, not by agitators, but by the masses themselves.

There are such people in the Russian countryside; the majority of the peasants belong to the category of the very poor and the poor peasants, who are not in a position to trade in grain surpluses and become robbers hoarding perhaps hundreds of poods of grain while others are starving. The situation today is such that every peasant will perhaps call himself a toiling peasant—some people are very fond of this term; but how can you call anyone a toiling peasant who has by his own labour, even without the aid of hired labour, gathered hundreds of poods of grain and figures that if he holds this grain he will be able to sell it, not for six rubles per pood but to a profiteer, or to an exhausted and starving urban worker who has come with his starving family and will pay two hundred rubles. Why, such a peasant, who hoards hundreds of poods of grain in order to raise the price and get even a hundred rubles a pood, becomes an exploiter, something worse than a robber! What is to be done under these circumstances? Whom can we rely upon in our struggle? We know that the Soviet revolution and the Soviet government differ from other revolutions and other governments not only by the fact that they have overthrown the power of the landlords and the capitalists, that they have destroyed the feudal state, the autocracy, but also by the fact that the masses have rebelled against all officials and created a new state in which the power must belong to the workers and peasants —and not only must, but already does belong to them. In this state there are no police and no officials, and there is no standing army kept in barracks for many years isolated from the people and trained to shoot down the people.

We are arming the workers and peasants, who must learn the art of war. There are detachments who succumb to temptation, to vice and crime because they are not separated by a Chinese wall from the world of oppression, from the world of starvation, in which the well-fed try to coin wealth out of their abundance. That is why we often see detachments of class conscious workers from Petrograd and Moscow, on reaching their place of destination, going astray and becoming criminals. And we see the bourgeoisie clapping their hands in delight and filling the columns of their venal newspapers with all sorts of bogies to frighten the people. "See what your detachments

are like," they say, "what disorder they are creating and how much better were the detachments of private capitalists!"

No, thank you, Messieurs the bourgeoisie! Don't try to frighten us! You know very well that the ills and ulcers of the capitalist world cannot be cured all at once. And we know that cure will come only in struggle; we will give publicity to every incident of this kind, not for the counter-revolutionary Mensheviks and Cadets to snicker and gloat over, but to teach the broad masses of the people. Since our detachments are not equal to their duties, give us more enlightened detachments, larger detachments of men loyal to the working class, far exceeding in number those who gave way to temptation. They must be organised and educated; around every enlightened worker, unenlightened, exploited and starving toilers must be united. The rural poor must be roused, educated, and shown that the Soviet government will give and do all it possibly can to help them, so as to carry out the grain monopoly.

And so, when we approached this task, when the Soviet government definitely raised these problems, it said: Comrades, workers, organise, unite the food forces, combat every case in which these detachments prove to be unworthy of their mission, organise more strongly, and rectify your mistakes, unite the village poor around yourselves! The kulaks know that their last hour is nigh, that their enemy is advancing not merely with sermons, with words and phrases, but with the organisation of the village poor; and if we succeed in organising them we shall vanquish the kulaks. The kulaks know that the hour of the last, most determined, most desperate battle for socialism is at hand. This struggle seems to be only a struggle for bread, but as a matter of fact it is a struggle for socialism. If the workers learn to solve these problems independently—and no one will come to their aid-if they learn to unite the village poor around themselves, we shall win, and there will be bread and the proper distribution of bread, and even the proper distribution of labour, for by distributing bread properly we shall be supreme in all spheres of labour, in all spheres of industry.

Foreseeing all this, the kulaks have made repeated attempts to bribe the poor. They know that grain must be sold to the state at six rubles per pood; so they sell it to a poor peasant neighbour at three rubles per pood and say to him: "You can go to a profiteer and sell at forty rubles. Our interests are the same; we must unite against the state which is robbing us. It wants to give us six rubles a pood; here, take two or three poods, and you can make sixty rubles. You need not worry about how much I make, that is my business."

I know that because of this, armed conflicts with the peasants repeatedly occur, and the enemies of the Soviet government gloat over it and snicker, and exert every effort to overthrow the Soviet government. But we say: "That is because the food detachments sent were not enlightened enough." But the larger the detachments were, the more frequently we had cases when the peasants gave their grain without a single case of coercion—and this happened repeatedly because the enlightened workers point out that they are not marauders, that their main strength lies in the fact that they are the representatives of the organised and enlightened poor. In the rural districts there is still a mass of ignorance, the poor are not enlightened. If the latter are approached in an intelligent manner, if they are told in plain language, without bookish words, in a plain human way, that in Petrograd and Moscow, and in scores of districts where people are starving, typhus is spreading as a result of famine, tens of thousands of Russian peasants and workers are dying of starvation, while the rich are unjustly hoarding grain and making a profit out of the starvation of the people, it will be possible to organise the poor and get the surplus grain collected, and this will be done not by coercion but by the organisation of the village poor.

I frequently receive reports about the kulaks from comrades who have gone to the villages with food detachments and who are fighting counter-revolution. I will quote an example (I have a particularly lively recollection of this case because I heard of it only yesterday) of something that occurred in the Eletz district. There, thanks to the organisation of the Soviet, and because there are enough enlightened workers and poor peasants, it was possible to consolidate the power of the poor. The first time the representatives of the Eletz district came to report to me, I would not believe them; I thought they were boasting. But comrades who had been sent especially from Moscow to other provinces confirmed that they had organised things in Eletz in a way only to be welcomed; that there were districts in Russia where the local Soviets proved equal to their tasks and had succeeded in completely removing the kulaks and exploiters from the Soviets and in organising the toilers, the poor. Let those who use their wealth for profit clear out of the Soviet state organisations!

After they had expelled the kulaks they went to the town of Eletz, a trading town, and here they did not wait for a decree to introduce the grain monopoly. They remembered that the Soviets are a government close to the people, and that every man, if he is a revolutionary, if he is a Socialist, and is really on the side of the working people, must act swiftly and resolutely. They organised all the workers and poor peasants and formed so many detachments that they were able to cover the entire town. They allowed only the trusted and responsible leaders of the detachments to enter the houses. Not a single person of whom they were not certain was allowed to enter the houses, for they knew how often vacillations occur and that nothing disgraces the Soviet government so much as these cases of pilfering committed by unworthy representatives and servants of the Soviet government. They succeeded in collecting a huge quantity of surplus grain, and there was not a single house left in the trading town of Eletz in which the bourgeoisie can make money by profiteering.

Of course, I know that it is much easier to do this in a small town than in a city like Moscow, but it must not be forgotten that not a single district town possesses the proletarian forces that Moscow has.

Recently, in Tambov, the counter-revolutionaries were victorious for several hours. They even got out an issue of a Menshevik and Right Socialist-Revolutionary newspaper which called for a Constituent Assembly, for the overthrow of the Soviet government, and they talked about the permanent victory of the new government. But the Red Army men and peasants arrived from the district and in one day kicked out this new "permanent" government which claimed to be resting on the Constituent Assembly.

The same thing occurred in other districts of the Tambov province—a province of enormous dimensions. Its northern districts are contiguous to the non-agricultural zone, but its southern districts are extraordinarily fertile. There the harvest is very big, and there are many peasants who have surplus grain. There one must be able to act energetically and possess a particularly firm and clear appreciation of the necessity of relying on the poor peasants in order to vanquish the kulaks. There, the kulaks are hostile to every sort of workers' and peasants' government, and our people must wait for the assistance of the Petrograd and Moscow workers who, on every occasion, armed with the weapon of organisation, expel the kulaks from the Soviets, organise the poor and jointly with the local peasants acquire experience

in fighting for the state monopoly of grain, experience in organising the rural poor and the urban workers in such a way as will guarantee us final and complete victory.

I have quoted these examples to illustrate the food situation, because it seems to me that to characterise the fight against the kulaks for bread from the point of view of the toilers, the important thing for us, for the workers, the class-conscious proletariat, is not so much the statistical estimate of how many million poods we can secure that I leave to the food experts. I must say that if we succeed in securing the surplus grain from the provinces adjacent to the Moscow non-agricultural zone and fertile Siberia, we shall have enough grain, even during the few severe weeks that remain until the new harvest, to save the hungry non-agricultural provinces from starvation. In order to do that we must organise a still larger number of class conscious, advanced workers. This is the main lesson to be learnt from all preceding revolutions, and it is the main lesson to be learnt from our revolution too. The more organisation there is, the more widely it manifests itself, and the more the workers in the factories and mills understand that our strength lies entirely in their organisation and in that of the village poor, the more certain shall we be of victory in the struggle against famine and in the struggle for socialism.

For, I repeat, our task is not to invent a new form of government, but to rouse, to educate and to organise every representative of the village poor, even in the most remote villages, for independent activity. It will not be difficult for a few class conscious urban workers from Petrograd or Moscow to explain, even in remote villages, that it is unjust to hoard grain, to profiteer in grain, to use it for making vodka, when hundreds of thousands are dying in Moscow. In order to do this, the workers of Petrograd and Moscow, and particularly you, the representatives of the factory committees, of the most varied trades, must thoroughly understand that no one will come to your assistance, that from the other class you can expect, not assistants, but enemies, that the Soviet government has no loyal intelligentsia at its service. The intelligentsia are using their experience and knowledge—the highest possessions of mankind-in the service of the exploiters, and are doing all they can to prevent our victory over the exploiters. But even if they cause hundreds of thousands to die of starvation, that will not break the resistance of the working people. We have no one to depend upon but the class with which we achieved the revolution

and with which we shall face the very great difficulties, the very difficult period ahead of us—and that is the factory workers, the urban and rural proletariat, who have a common language, and who in both town and country will vanquish all enemies—the kulaks and the rich.

But in order to achieve this we must remember the fundamental postulate of the socialist revolution which the workers so often forget: that in order to make the socialist revolution, in order to bring it about, in order to liberate the people from oppression, it is necessary to abolish classes. The most class conscious and organised workers must take the power in their hands. The workers must become the ruling class in the state. That is the truth the majority of you have already read in the Communist Manifesto of Marx and Engels, written over seventy years ago, and translated into all languages and circulated in all countries. Everywhere the truth has been revealed that in order to vanquish the capitalists it is necessary during the struggle against exploitation, while it is still unclear, while people do not yet believe in the new system, that the organised urban factory workers become the ruling class. When you get together in your factory committees to settle your affairs, remember that the revolution will not be able to retain a single one of its gains, if you in your factory committees merely concern yourselves with the technical or purely financial interests of the workers.

The workers and the oppressed classes have managed to seize power more than once, but never have they been able to retain it. For this purpose it is not only necessary for the workers to be able to rise in heroic struggle and overthrow exploitation; they must also be able to organise, to maintain discipline, to be staunch, calmly to discuss affairs when everything is tottering and crumbling, when they are being attacked, when innumerable stupid rumours are being spread—it is at such a time that the factory committees, which in all things are closely connected with the vast masses, are faced with the great state task of becoming primarily an organ of administration of political life.

The fundamental problem of state that faces the Soviet government is how to secure the proper distribution of grain. While Eletz may have succeeded in bridling the local bourgeoisie, it is more difficult to do this in Moscow; but here there is incomparably greater organisation, and here you can more easily find tens of thousands of honest people whom your parties and your trade unions will supply and can

answer for, and people who will be able to lead the detachments with every guarantee that they will remain ideologically loyal in spite of all difficulties, in spite of all temptations, and in spite of the torments of hunger. There is no other class but the urban factory proletariat that can undertake this task at the present time, no other class capable of leading the people, who often fall into despair. Your factory committees must cease to be merely factory committees, they must become the fundamental state nuclei of the ruling class. Your organisation, your solidarity, your energy will determine whether we shall hold out in this severe transitional period as staunchly as the Soviet government should. Take up this work yourselves, take it up from every side, expose abuses every day, use your own experience to rectify every mistake that is committed—many mistakes are being committed today because the working class is still inexperienced; but the important thing is that the working class should take up this work itself and itself rectify the mistakes. If we act in this way, if every committee understands that it is one of the leaders of the greatest revolution in the world, we shall win socialism for the whole world!

#### REPLY TO THE DISCUSSION

Comrades, permit me first of all to deal with several of the points of objection raised against me by the co-reporter Paderin. I note from the stenographic report that he said: "We must do everything possible to enable the proletariat, primarily of England and Germany, to come out against their oppressors. How can that be done? Are we to help these oppressors? By rousing enmity in our own midst, by shattering and weakening the country, we infinitely strengthen the position of the imperialists—British, French, and German—who in the end will unite in order to strangle the working class of Russia."

This is an argument which shows how irresolute the Mensheviks always were in their struggle against, and opposition to, imperialist war, because the argument I have just quoted can only be understood when it comes from the lips of a man who calls himself a defencist, who entirely takes up the position of imperialism, of a man who justifies imperialist war by repeating the bourgeois slogans that in such a war the workers defend their fatherland. For if one adopts the point of view that the workers must not shatter and weaken the country during such a war, it is tantamount to calling upon the workers

to defend the fatherland in an imperialist war. And you know what the Bolshevik government has done: it considered as its first duty to publish, to expose, and publicly to pillory the secret treaties. You know that the allies waged the war for the sake of the secret treaties, and that the Kerensky government, which existed with the aid and support of the Mensheviks and the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, far from annulling the secret treaties did not even publish them; you know that the Russian people waged the war for the sake of these secret treaties, which promised the Russian landlords and capitalists, in the event of victory, Constantinople, the Dardanelles, Lvov, Galicia and Armenia. Accordingly, if we hold the point of view of the working class, if we are opposed to the war, how could we tolerate these secret treaties? As long as we tolerated the secret treaties, as long as we tolerated the rule of the bourgeoisie in Russia, we fostered the chauvinistic conviction in the minds of the German workers that there were no class conscious workers in Russia, that everyone in Russia supported imperialism and that Russia was waging war for the purpose of plundering Austria and Turkey. The workers' and peasants' government, on the other hand, has done more than any other government in the world to weaken the German imperialists, to tear the German workers from their sway; for when the secret treaties were published and exposed to the eyes of the world, even the German chauvinists, even the German defencists, even those workers who support their government, had to admit in their newspaper Vorwärts [Forward],\* their central organ, that this was the act of a socialist government, a genuinely revolutionary act. They had to admit it because not a single imperialist government involved in the war did this; ours was the only government that denounced the secret treaties.

Of course, at the back of every German worker's mind, no matter how cowed, downtrodden, or bribed by the imperialists he may be, there stirs the thought: "How about our government, hasn't it got secret treaties?"

(A voice: "Tell us about the Black Sea Fleet.")

All right, I will, although it has nothing to do with the subject in hand. At the back of every German worker's mind there stirs the thought: "The Russian workers have gone to the length of denouncing the secret treaties; but has the German government no secret treaties?"

Official organ of the German Social-Democratic Party, founded in 1883.—Ed.

When the Brest-Litovsk negotiations commenced Comrade Trotsky's exposures were broadcast to the whole world. Did not this policy rouse, in an enemy country engaged in a terrible imperialist war with other governments, not animosity, but the sympathy of the masses of the people? The only government to do that was ours. Our revolution has had the effect of rousing a great revolutionary movement during war time in an enemy country merely by the fact that we denounced the secret treaties, and said that we would not be deterred by any danger. If we know, if we say—and not merely say it, but mean it—that international revolution is the only salvation from international war, from the imperialist massacre of the peoples, then we in our revolution must pursue that aim notwithstanding all difficulties and all dangers. And when we took this path, for the first time in the world during a war in that most imperialistic and most disciplined country, Germany, a mass strike broke out and flared up in January.\*

Of course, there are people who believe that a revolution can break out in a foreign country to order, by agreement. These people are either madmen or provocateurs. We have experienced two revolutions during the past twelve years. We know that revolutions cannot be made to order, or by agreement, that they break out when tens of millions of people come to the conclusion that it is impossible to live in the old way any longer. We know what difficulties accompanied the birth of the revolution in 1905 and in 1917, and we never expected revolution to break out in other countries at one stroke, as a result of a single appeal. The fact that revolution is beginning to spread in Germany and in Austria is to the great credit of the Russian October Revolution. We read in the newspapers today that in Vienna, where the bread ration is even smaller than ours, where not even the plunder of the Ukraine can bring relief, where the people are saying that they have never experienced such horrors of starvation before, a Council of Workers' Deputies has sprung up. In Vienna general strikes are breaking out again.

And we say to ourselves: There you have the second step, the second proof that when the Russian workers denounced the imperialist secret treaties, when they drove out their bourgeoisie, they acted as consistent class conscious worker-internationalists, they helped the growth of the revolution in Germany and in Austria in a way

<sup>\*</sup> This strike took place January, 1918, affecting about 500,000 munition workers in Berlin.—Ed.

that no other revolution in the world has ever helped a revolution in a hostile country which was at war and where bitter feeling ran high.

To forecast when the revolution will break out, to promise that it will come tomorrow, would be to deceive you. You will remember, particularly those of you who have been through both Russian revolutions, that in November 1904 no one could guarantee that within two months a hundred thousand St. Petersburg workers would march to the Winter Palace and start a great revolution.\*

Recall December 1916. Who could vouch that within two months the tsarist monarchy would be overthrown in the course of a few days? We in this country, where we have experienced two revolutions, know and realise that the progress of a revolution cannot be foretold and that revolution cannot be invoked. All we can do is to work for the revolution. If you work consistently, if you work devotedly, if this work is linked up with the interests of the oppressed masses who represent the majority, revolution will come; but where, how, at what moment, from what immediate cause, cannot be foretold. That is why we shall never permit ourselves to deceive the masses by saying that the German workers will help us tomorrow, or that they will blow up their Kaiser the day after tomorrow. We have no right to say such things.

Our position is the more difficult for the reason that the Russian Revolution has proved to be ahead of other revolutions; but that we are not alone is shown by the news which reaches us nearly every day that all the best German Social-Democrats are coming out in favour of the Bolsheviks; that the Bolsheviks are being supported in the open German press by Clara Zetkin and also by Franz Mehring, who has written a number of articles showing the German workers that the Bolsheviks alone properly understand what socialism means; and by the news that recently a Social-Democrat named Hoschka definitely stated in the Württemberg Landtag that he regarded the Bolsheviks as the only models of consistency and of correctly pursued revolutionary policy. Do you think that such statements do not find an echo among scores, hundreds and thousands of German workers, who are prepared to endorse them almost before they are uttered?

<sup>\*</sup>On January 22, 1905, a peaceful demonstration of Petersburg workers before the Tsar's Winter Palace was fired upon by troops, resulting in about three thousand people killed and wounded.—Ed.

When affairs in Germany and Austria have reached the stage of the formation of Councils of Workers' Deputies and of a second mass strike, we can say without the least exaggeration, without the least self-deception, that this marks the approach of revolution. We say very definitely that our policy and our path was a correct policy and a correct path; we helped the Austrian and the German workers to feel that they are not enemies strangling the Russian workers in the interests of the Kaiser, in the interests of the German capitalists, but brothers of the Russian workers who are performing the same revolutionary work as they.

I would also like to mention a passage in Paderin's speech which, in my opinion, deserves attention, all the more since it partly coincides with the idea of the preceding speaker. This is the passage: "We now see that the civil war is being waged within the working class. Can we tolerate this?" You see, he describes the civil war as a war within the working class, or as a war against the peasants, as the preceding speaker had described it. But we know perfectly well that both descriptions are false. The civil war in Russia is a war of the workers and the poor peasants against the landlords and capitalists. This war is being prolonged and protracted because the Russian landlords and capitalists were vanquished in October and November with relatively small losses, were vanquished by the onslaught of the masses of the people amidst conditions which immediately made it clear to them that the people would not support them. Things reached a stage when even in the Don region, where the number of rich Cossacks who live by exploiting wage labour is largest, where the hopes of a counterrevolution ran highest, even there, Bogayevsky, the leader of the counter-revolutionary rebellion, was forced to admit, and admit publicly: "Ours is a lost cause, for even in our region the vast majority of the population are on the side of the Bolsheviks."

That was the position, that was how the landlords and capitalists played and lost their counter-revolutionary game in October and November.

That was what came of their sinister adventure when they tried to organise the Cadets, the officers, the sons of landlords and capitalists into a White Guard to fight the workers' and peasants' revolution. And now, as you know—read today's newspapers—the Czechoslovak adventurers are operating with the financial assistance of the British and French capitalists who are bribing troops for the purpose of

dragging us into war again. You have read, of course, what the Czechoslovaks said in Samara. They said: "We shall join Dutov and Semyonov and compel the workers of Russia and the Russian people once again to fight against Germany side by side with England and France. We shall restore those secret treaties and fling you, for another four years perhaps, into this imperialist war in alliance with the bourgeoisie." But instead of that we are now waging war against our bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisie of other countries, and it is solely because we are waging this war that we have won the sympathy and support of the workers of other countries. If the workers of one belligerent country see that in the other belligerent country close connections are being established between the workers and the bourgeoisie, it tends to split the workers according to nation and to merge them with their respective bourgeoisie. That is a great evil; it means the collapse of the socialist revolution, the collapse and doom of the whole International.

In 1914 the International was wrecked because the workers of all countries united with the bourgeoisie in their respective countries and split their own ranks. Now this split is being healed. You may perhaps have read recently that in Great Britain, the Scottish schoolteacher and trade unionist. McLean was sentenced for a second time. this time, to five years' imprisonment (the first time he got eighteen months) for exposing the real objects of the war and for speaking about the criminal nature of British imperialism. By the time he was released a representative of the Soviet government was already in England—Litvinov, who immediately appointed McLean consul, a representative of the Soviet Russian Federative Republic in England. The Scottish workers greeted this appointment with enthusiasm. The British government started to persecute McLean a second time, not only as a Scottish school-teacher, but also as consul of the Federative Soviet Republic. McLean is in prison because he came out openly as the representative of our government. We have never seen this man, he has never belonged to our party. He is the beloved leader of the Scottish workers, and we joined with him; the Russian and Scottish workers joined forces against the British government in spite of the fact that the latter is buying up Czechoslovaks and pursuing a furious policy which is aimed at dragging the Russian republic into the war. This is proof that in all countries, whatever their position in the war-in Germany which is fighting against us, in England which is

trying to grab Bagdad and completely strangle Turkey—the workers are uniting with the Russian Bolsheviks, with the Russian Bolshevik revolution. When the speaker whose words I have quoted said that workers and peasants are waging a civil war against workers and peasants, we know perfectly well that this is not true. The working class is one thing; groups, small sections of the working class are another.

From 1871 to 1914, for almost half a century, the German working class served as a model of socialist organisation for the whole world. We know that it had a party with a million members, that it created trade unions with a membership of two, three, or four millions; nevertheless, all through this half century there were hundreds of thousands of German workers united in priest-ridden Catholic trade unions who stood solidly for the priests, for the church and for their Kaiser. Who were the real representatives of the working class? Was it the huge German Social-Democrat Party and trade unions, or the few hundred thousand Catholic workers? The working class, which embraces the overwhelming majority of the class conscious, advanced, thinking workers is one thing, while a single factory, a single district, a few groups of workers who still remain on the side of the bourgeoisie, are another.

The vast and overwhelming majority of the working class of Russia—this is shown by all the elections to Soviets, factory committees and conferences—ninety-nine per cent of them are on the side of the Soviet government, knowing that this government is waging war against the bourgeoisie, against the kulaks, and not against the peasants and workers. It is an altogether different thing when an insignificant group of workers still remain in slavish dependence upon the bourgeoisie. We do not wage war against them but against the bourgeoisie; and all the worse for those insignificant groups which still remain in alliance with the bourgeoisie.

A question has been sent up to me in writing. It reads as follows: "Why are counter-revolutionary newspapers still being published?" One of the reasons is that there are elements among the printers who are bribed by the bourgeoisie. "(Commotion, shouts: "It is not true.") You can shout as much as you like, but you will not prevent me from telling the truth, which all the workers know and which I have just begun to explain. When a worker attaches paramount importance to his own wages, earned by working for the bourgeois press, when

he says: "I want to preserve my own high wages, earned by helping the bourgeoisie to purvey poison, to poison the minds of the people," then I say that such workers are as good as bribed by the bourgeoisie; not in the sense that any individual person is hired—that is not how I mean it-but in the sense in which all Marxists have spoken about the English workers who concluded an alliance with their capitalists. All of you have read trade union literature and know that there are not only workers' trade unions in England but also alliances between the workers and capitalists in a particular industry for the purpose of raising prices and robbing everybody else. All Marxists, all Socialists of all countries, beginning with Marx and Engels, point their finger at these cases and say that there are workers who allow themselves to be bribed by the bourgeoisie because of their ignorance and in pursuit of their craft interests. They have sold their birthright, their right to the socialist revolution, by entering into an alliance with their capitalists against the overwhelming majority of the workers and the oppressed toilers in their own country, against their own class. The same thing is happening here. When certain groups of our workers say: "What do we care if the stuff we print is opium, a poison that spreads lies and provocation; we get good wages and don't care a hang for anybody else"—we will denounce them. In our literature we have always said, and said openly, that such workers are abandoning the working class and deserting to the side of the bourgeoisie.

I will deal in a moment with the questions that have been put to me; but first of all, so as not to forget, I will reply to the question about the Black Sea Fleet, \* which seems to have been put with the idea of exposing us. Let me tell you that the man handling matters there was Comrade Raskolnikov, whom the Moscow and Petrograd workers know very well from his propaganda and party work. Comrade Raskolnikov will be here himself and will tell you how he agitated in favour of destroying the fleet rather than allow German troops to use it for the purpose of attacking Novorossisk. That was the situation in regard to the Black Sea Fleet; and the People's Commissars Stalin, Shlyapnikov and Raskolnikov will soon be in Moscow and will tell us all about it. You will see that our policy, like the Brest-Litovsk peace policy, caused us many a bitter misfortune, but was

The Black Sea Fleet was scuttled in Novorossisk on June 18-19, 1918, to prevent it falling into the hands of the Germans.—Ed.

the only one which enabled the Soviet government and the workers' socialist revolution to keep their flag flying in the sight of the workers of all countries. If the number of workers in Germany who are discarding their old prejudices about the Bolsheviks and who understand that our policy is correct is growing from day to day, it is due to the tactics we have been pursuing, beginning with the Brest-Litovsk Treaty.

Of the questions that were sent up to me I will deal with the second one, relating to the transportation of grain. Certain workers ask: "Why do you prohibit individual workers from bringing in grain when it is for the use of their own families?" The reply is a simple one. Just think what would happen if the thousands of poods required for a given locality, for a given factory, for a given district, or a given street, were brought in by thousands of people. If we allowed this the food supply organisations would begin to break down entirely. We do not blame the man who, tormented by hunger, goes off alone into the country to get bread and procures it in whatever way he can; but we do say that we do not exist as a workers' and peasants' government in order to legalise and encourage disintegration and chaos. A government is not required for that. It is required for the purpose of uniting people, of organising and welding them for an enlightened struggle against unenlightenment. We cannot blame those who because of their unenlightenment throw everything to the winds, close their eyes to everything, and try to save themselves by procuring grain in whatever way they can. But we can blame those who are party people and advocates of the grain monopoly, yet do not do enough to foster enlightened and united action.

Yes, the struggle against the petty profiteers, against the private transportation of grain is a very difficult one, because it is a struggle against ignorance, against unenlightenment, against the lack of organisation of the broad masses; but we shall never abandon this struggle. Every time people rush off to procure food privately, we shall call for proletarian, socialist methods of combating the famine: Let us unite together and replace unhealthy food detachments by new forces, by fresher, stronger, more honest, more class-conscious and tried men, and we shall procure the same amount of grain, the same thousands of poods that are procured privately by two hundred persons, each dragging along fifteen poods, raising prices and increasing profiteering. We will unite these two hundred persons and create a strong and

compact workers' army. If we do not succeed at once we shall repeat our efforts; we shall try to induce the class conscious workers in every factory to delegate larger numbers of people, of more reliable people, for the purpose of combating profiteering, and we are sure that the class consciousness, discipline and organisation of the workers will in the end cope with all severe trials. When people become convinced by their own experience that private food procuring cannot save hundreds of thousands from starvation, we shall see the victory of organisation and class consciousness, and, by united action, we shall organise the fight against famine and secure the proper distribution of grain.

I am asked: "Why is there no monopoly of manufactured goods, which are as necessary as grain?" My reply is that the Soviet government is adopting all measures to this end. You know that there is a tendency to organise, to amalgamate the textile factories, the textile industry. You know that the majority of the people in the leading bodies of this organisation are workers, you know that the Soviet government is proceeding to nationalise all branches of industry; you know that the difficulties in the way are enormous and that much effort will be required to do all this in an organised manner. We are not setting to work on this task in the way governments which rely on bureaucrats do. It is easy to govern in that way: Let one man receive 400 rubles a month; let another get more, a thousand rubles a monthour business is to give orders and theirs to carry them out. That is how all bourgeois countries administer their affairs. They hire officials at high salaries, they hire the sons of the bourgeoisie and entrust the administration to them. The Soviet Republic cannot administer its affairs in this way. It has no officials to administer and guide the work of amalgamating all the textile factories, of registering all their property and stocks, of introducing a monopoly of all articles of prime necessity and of properly distributing them. We call upon the workers to do this work; we call upon the representatives of the textile workers' unions and say to them: You must be the majority on the leading body of the Central Textile Board, and you are the majority on it, as you are the majority on the leading bodies of the Supreme Council of National Economy. Comrades, workers, take this very important task of state into your own hands. We know that it is more difficult than appointing business-like officials, but we also know that there is no other way. Power must be placed in the hands of the working

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class, and the advanced workers must, in spite of all difficulties, learn from their own experience, from their own mistakes, from the work of their own hands, how all articles, all textile goods should be distributed in the interests of the working people.

Hence, the Soviet government is doing all it possibly can in the present circumstances to introduce a state monopoly and to fix prices. It is doing it through the medium of the workers and in conjunction with the workers; it gives them the majority on every management board, and in every leading centre, whether it is the Supreme Council of National Economy, or the amalgamated metal workers, or the amalgamated sugar refineries, which were nationalised in a few weeks. This is a difficult road; but, I repeat, difficulties are unavoidable when you are trying to put workers—accustomed and trained by the bourgeoisie for hundreds of years merely to slavishly carry out its orders—on a new status, to make them feel: we are the government, we are the owners of industry, we are the owners of the grain, we are the owners of all the goods in the country. Only when this has deeply penetrated the minds of the working class, when, by their own experience, by their own efforts, they increase their forces tenfold, will all the difficulties of the socialist revolution be overcome.

I conclude by once again appealing to this conference of factory committees. In the city of Moscow the difficulties are particularly great because it is an enormous centre of trade and profiteering, in which, for many years, tens of thousands of people have obtained their livelihood by trade and profiteering. Here the difficulties are particularly great, but here, on the other hand, there are forces that no small town in the country possesses. Let the workers' organisations, let the factory committees only remember and firmly bear in mind what present events and the famine that has afflicted the working people of Russia teach. Only more organisations, broader organisations. of class conscious and advanced workers can save the revolution from a return to the rule of the landlords and capitalists. These workers are now the majority, but that is not enough; they must take a greater part in public work. In Moscow we have hosts of cases of profiteers exploiting the famine, making profit out of the famine, thwarting the grain monopoly, hosts of cases of the rich having everything they desire. In Moscow there are eight thousand members of the Communist Party; in Moscow the trade unions can delegate twenty thousand or thirty thousand men and women for whom they can youch, who will

be reliable and staunch exponents of proletarian policy. Unite them, create hundreds of thousands of detachments, fight in the cause of food, fight for a search of all the houses of the rich, and you will secure what you need.

I told you last time of the successes achieved in this respect in the town of Eletz; but in Moscow it is more difficult. I said that Eletz was the best organised town. There are many towns that are much worse organised, because this is a difficult matter; it is not because of a shortage of arms—we have any amount of them. The difficulty lies in appointing hundreds and thousands of absolutely reliable workers to leading, responsible posts, workers able to understand that they are not working in their local cause but in the cause of the whole of Russia, who can stick to their post as representatives of the whole class, can organise the work according to a definite and systematic plan, and can carry out orders, can carry out the decisions of the Moscow Soviet, of the Moscow organisations representing the whole of proletarian Moscow. The whole difficulty is to organise the proletariat, to train it to be more class conscious than it has been up to the present.

Look at the Petrograd elections. You will see that although even worse famine is raging there than in Moscow and even greater misfortunes have befallen it, loyalty to the workers' revolution is growing, organisation and solidarity are increasing, and you will say that with the growing calamities that befall us, the determination of the working class to overcome these difficulties is also growing. Take this path, increase your efforts, put new thousand-strong detachments on this path to help in the matter of food supply, and, with your aid, relying on your support, we will overcome the famine and secure proper distribution.

#### RESOLUTION ON THE REPORT

This Fourth Moscow Conference of Factory Committees whole-heartedly supports the food policy of the Soviet government and particularly approves and stresses the necessity of all workers supporting the policy of uniting the rural poor.

The emancipation of the workers can be the act only of the workers themselves; and only the closest alliance between the urban workers and the rural poor is capable of vanquishing the resistance of the bourgeoisie and the kulaks, taking all grain surpluses into their own

hands and properly distributing them among the needy population of both town and country.

The conference calls upon all factory committees to exert every effort to organise wider masses of workers in the food detachments and to employ them, under the leadership of thoroughly reliable comrades, for the purpose of giving active and all-round support to the food policy of the workers' and peasants' government.

Report at Fourth Conference of Moscow Trade Unions and Factory Committees, held June 27-July 2, 1918.

Published in the Proceedings of the Fourth Conference of Moscow Factory Committees and Trade Unions, 1918.

# THE STRUGGLE AGAINST COUNTER-REVOLUTION

LENIN spoke of the necessity of civil war and called upon the Moscow proletariat to organise solidly in the struggle both against the forces of counter-revolution and against famine and disruption in the country.

In passing, he touched on events in the cities of Saratov and Tambov, and pointed out that wherever revolts inspired by the Menshevik and Right Socialist-Revolutionary parties broke out the working class very rapidly became disillusioned in these parties and no less rapidly overthrew the usurpers of the workers' and peasants' power.

We would receive telegrams, he said, appealing for aid, but before our troops could get half way, the workers who had sent the appeal would inform us that the need for immediate assistance had passed as the usurpers had been vanquished by local forces. Such was the case in Saratov, Tambov, and other cities.

Lenin stated that, in general, war runs counter to the aims of the Communist Party. But the war that is being preached today is a sacred war; it is a civil war, a war of the working class against its exploiters.

Without effort, without tremendous expenditure of energy, he said, we shall never set foot on the road to socialism. A successful fight for the ideals of the working class entails organisation. Organisation is also needed to consolidate the gains we won at the cost of such severe sacrifice and effort.

It is harder to retain power than to seize it, and we know of many cases in history when the working class took the power into its hands but was unable to retain it only because it did not possess strong enough organisations.

The people are worn out, Lenin continued, and they may, of course, be driven to any folly, even to the acceptance of a Skoropadsky; for, in their mass, the people are ignorant.

Famine is impending, but we know that there is grain enough even without Siberia, the Caucasus, and the Ukraine. There is enough grain in the provinces surrounding the capital to last us until the new harvest, but it is all hidden away by the kulaks. We must organise the poor peasants, so as to get this grain with their help. A ruthless war, by deed as well as by word, must be waged on profiteering and profiteers.

Only the working class, knit together by organisation, can explain to the common people the need for war on the kulaks. The Russian people must know that the poor peasantry has a powerful ally in the shape of the organised urban proletariat.

The working class and the peasantry must not place too much hope in the intelligentsia, as many of the intellectuals although moving toward us are still expecting our downfall.

Lenin concluded with an appeal to organise for the struggle of the workers and peasants against the kulaks, the landlords and the bourgeoisie.

Newspaper account of speech at a Moscow meeting, June 28, 1918.

Izvestia, No. 133 (397), June 29, 1918.

### PROPHETIC WORDS

NOBODY, thank God, believes in miracles nowadays. Miraculous prophecy is a fairy tale. But scientific prophecy is a fact. And in these days, when we so often meet with shameful despondency and even despair about us, it is useful to recall one scientific prophecy which has come true.

Frederick Engels had occasion in 1887 to write of the coming world war in a preface to a pamphlet by Sigismund Borkheim, In Memory of the German Arch-Patriots of 1806-1807 (Zur Erinnerung für die deutschen Mordspatrioten 1806-1807). (This pamphlet is No. XXIV of the Social-Democratic Library published in Göttingen-Zürich in 1888.)

This is how Frederick Engels spoke over thirty years ago of the future world war:

"... No war is any longer possible for Prussia-Germany except a world war and a world war indeed of an extension and violence hiterto undreamt of. Eight to ten millions of soldiers will mutually massacre one another and in doing so devour the whole of Europe until they have stripped it barer than any swarm of locusts has ever done. The devastations of the Thirty Years' War compressed into three or four years, and spread over the whole Continent; famine, pestilence, general demoralisation both of the armies and of the mass of the people produced by acute distress; hopeless confusion of our artificial machinery in trade, industry, and credit, ending in general bankruptcy; collapse of the old states and their traditional state wisdom to such an extent that crowns will roll by dozens on the pavement and there will be nobody to pick them up; absolute impossibility of foreseeing how it will all end and who will come out of the struggle as victor; only one result absolutely certain: general exhaustion and the establishment of the conditions for the ultimate victory of the working class.

"This is the prospect when the system of mutual outbidding in arma-

ments, driven to extremities, at last bears its inevitable fruits. This, my lords, princes and statesmen, is where in your wisdom you have brought old Europe. And when nothing more remains to you but to open the last great war dance—that will suit us all right (uns kann es recht sein). The war may perhaps push us temporarily into the background, may wrench from us many a position already conquered. But when you have unfettered forces which you will then no longer be able again to control, things may go as they will: at the end of the tragedy you will be ruined and the victory of the proletariat will either be already achieved or at any rate (doch) inevitable.

"Frederick Engels

"London, December 15, 1887"

What genius is displayed in this prophecy! And how infinitely rich in ideas is every phrase of this precise, clear, brief, and scientific class analysis! How much could be learnt from it by those who are now shamefully succumbing to lack of faith, despondency, and despair, if...if people who are accustomed to kowtow to the bourgeoisie, or who allow themselves to be frightened by it, could but think, were but capable of thinking!

Some of Engels' predictions have turned out differently: and one could not expect the world and capitalism not to have changed during thirty years of frenzied imperialist development. But what is most astonishing is that so many of Engels' predictions are turning out "according to the book." For Engels gave a perfectly exact class analysis, and classes and their mutual relations have remained unchanged.

"The war may perhaps push us temporarily into the background." Events have proceeded precisely along these lines, but have gone even further and more badly: some of the social-chauvinists who have been "pushed back," and their spineless "semi-opponents," the Kautskians, have begun to extol their backward movement and have become direct traitors and betrayers of socialism.

"The war may perhaps...wrench from us many a position already conquered." A number of "legal" positions have been wrenched from the working class. But on the other hand it has been steeled by trials and is receiving severe but salutary lessons in illegal organisation, in illegal struggle, and in preparing its forces for a revolutionary assault.

"Crowns will roll by dozens." Several crowns have already been

set rolling. And one of them is worth a dozen others—the crown of the autocrat of all the Russias, Nicholas Romanov.

"Absolute impossibility of foreseeing how it will all end." After four years of war this absolute impossibility has, if one may say so, become even more absolute.

"Hopeless confusion of our artificial machinery in trade, industry and credit." At the end of the fourth year of war this has been fully borne out in the case of one of the biggest and most backward states drawn into the war by the capitalists—Russia. But do not the growing starvation in Germany and Austria, the shortage of clothing and raw material and the worn-out condition of the means of production show that a similar state of affairs is very rapidly overtaking other countries as well?

Engels depicts the consequences brought about only by "Foreign" war; he does not deal with internal, i.e., civil war, without which not a single one of the great revolutions of history has taken place, and without which not a single serious Marxist has conceived the transition from capitalism to socialism. And while a foreign war may drag on for a certain time without causing "hopeless confusion" in the "artificial machinery" of capitalism, it is obvious that a civil war without such a consequence is quite inconceivable.

What stupidity, what spinelessness—not to say mercenary servility to the bourgeoisie—is displayed by those who, like our Novaya-Zhiznists,\* Mensheviks, Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, and others, while continuing to call themselves "Socialists," maliciously point to the manifestation of this "hopeless confusion" and lay the blame for everything on the revolutionary proletariat, the Soviet power, the "utopia" of the transition to socialism. The "confusion," or razrukha [disruption, disorganisation], to use the excellent Russian expression, has been brought about by the war. There can be no severe war without disruption. There can be no civil war—the inevitable condition and concomitant of socialist revolution—without disruption. To renounce revolution and socialism "in consideration of" the disruption only means to display one's lack of principle and in practice to desert to the bourgeoisie.

"Famine, pestilence, general demoralisation both of the armies and of the mass of the people produced by acute distress." How simply and clearly Engels draws this indisputable conclusion, which must be obvious to everyone who is at all capable of reflecting on the objective

<sup>\*</sup> See footnote on following page.—Ed.

consequences of many years of severe and painful war. And how astonishingly stupid are those numerous "Social-Democrats" and pseudo-Socialists who will not, or cannot, realise this most simple idea.

Is it conceivable that a war can last many years without both the armies and the masses of the people becoming demoralised? Of course, not. Such a consequence of a long war is absolutely inevitable for several years, if not a whole generation, after. Yet our "men in mufflers," \* the bourgeois intellectual snivellers who call themselves "Social-Democrats" and "Socialists," second the bourgeoisie in blaming the revolution for the manifestations of demoralisation or for the inevitable sternness of the measures taken to combat particularly acute cases of demoralisation—although it is as clear as noonday that this demoralisation has been produced by the imperialist war, and that no revolution can rid itself of such consequences of war without a long struggle and without a number of stern measures of repression.

Our sugary writers of the Novaya Zhizn, [New Life], the Vperyod [Forward] or the Dyelo Naroda [People's Cause] † are prepared to grant a revolution of the proletariat and other oppressed classes "theoretically," provided only that the revolution drops from heaven and is not born and bred on an earth soaked in the blood of four years of imperialist butchery of the peoples and with millions upon millions of men and women exhausted, tormented and demoralised by this butchery.

They had heard and admitted "in theory" that a revolution should be compared to an act of childbirth; but when it came to the point, they disgracefully took fright and their faint-hearted whimperings echoed the malicious outbursts of the bourgeoisie against the insurrection of the proletariat. Take the descriptions of childbirth given in literature, when the authors aim at presenting a truthful picture of the severity, pain and horror of the act of travail, as in Emile Zola's La Joie de Vivre (The Joy of Life), for instance, or in Veresayev's Notes of a Doctor. Human childbirth is an act which transforms the woman into an almost lifeless, bloodstained mass of flesh, tortured, tormented, and driven frantic by pain. But can the "type" that sees only this in love, in its sequel, in the transformation of the woman into a mother, be

<sup>\*</sup> See note on page 56.—Ed.

<sup>†</sup> Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary newspapers published in Petrograd and Moscow during 1917-18.—Ed.

regarded as a human being? Who would renounce love and procreation for this reason?

Travail may be light or severe. Marx and Engels, the founders of Scientific Socialism, always said that the transition from capitalism to socialism would be inevitably accompanied by prolonged birth pangs. And analysing the consequences of a world war, Engels outlines in a simple and clear manner the indisputable and obvious fact that a revolution that follows on and is connected with a war (and still more—let us add for our part—a revolution which breaks out during a war and which is obliged to grow and maintain itself in the midst of a world war) is a particularly severe case of travail.

Clearly realising this, Engels speaks with great caution of socialism being born out of a capitalist society which is perishing in a world war. "Only one result" of a world war, he says, "is absolutely certain: general exhaustion and the *establishment* of the conditions for the ultimate victory of the working class."

This thought is expressed even more clearly at the end of the preface we are examining: "At the end of the tragedy you [the capitalists and landlords, the princes and statesmen of the bourgeoisie] will be ruined and the victory of the proletariat will either be already achieved or at any rate inevitable."

Severe travail greatly increases the danger of grave illness, of a fatal outcome. But while individuals may die in the act of childbirth, the new society to which the old system gives birth cannot die; all that may happen is that the birth may be more painful, more prolonged, and growth and development slower.

The war has not yet ended. General exhaustion has already set in. As regards the two *direct* results of war conditionally predicted by Engels (either the victory of the working class already achieved, or the establishment of conditions which make it inevitable, *despite all difficulties*), as regards these two conditions, now, in the middle of 1918, we find *both* in evidence.

In one of the capitalist countries, the least developed, the victory of the working class is already achieved. In the others, with unparalleled pain and effort, the conditions are being established which will make this victory "at any rate inevitable."

Let the "Socialist" snivellers croak, let the bourgeoisie rage and fume; only people who shut their eyes so as not to see, and stuff their ears so as not to hear can fail to notice that all over the world the birth

pangs of the old capitalist society, which is pregnant with socialism, have begun. Our country, which has temporarily been advanced by the march of events to the van of the socialist revolution, is undergoing the very severe pains of the first period of travail, which has already begun. We have every reason to face the future with complete assurance and absolute confidence, for it is preparing for us new allies and new victories of the socialist revolution in a number of the more advanced countries. We are entitled to be proud and to consider ourselves fortunate that it has been our lot to be the first, in one part of the globe, to fell that wild beast, capitalism, which has drenched the earth in blood and reduced humanity to starvation and demoralisation, and whose end is near and inevitable, no matter how monstrous and savage its frenzy in the face of death.

Written June 29, 1918.

Pravda, No. 133, July 2, 1918.

### THE ARMY AND THE REVOLUTION

LENIN pointed out that the army, like the means of production, was formerly an instrument of oppression in the hands of the exploiting class. Today in Russia both are becoming weapons in the struggle for the interests of the working people.

This radical change was no easy thing to accomplish, as the soldiers of the old tsarist army know from the discipline that held that army in a vise. Lenin then cited a recent experience: when he was in Finland, he heard an old Finnish peasant woman say that whereas in the old days the man with the gun was there to prevent her gathering faggots in the forest, today he was no longer dangerous; on the contrary, he even protected her. In spite of all the mud slung at us by the bourgeois and their followers, Lenin said, in spite of all the plotting of the White Guards, once it has been brought home even to such unenlightened masses, the exploited, that the present army is the protector of the working folk, the Soviet government stands firmly planted.

Lenin then went on to say that famine was strengthening the hand of the profiteers and capitalists, as in the past. The same thing is occurring today; therefore, in the civil war the new army might have to deal with those people who are profiteering on the famine. Let the old world—the representatives of an outworn society—go on trying to help the starving in the old way; the new world will, despite them, do it in a new way. We will win, Lenin said, if the vanguard of the working people, the Red Army, remembers that it is there to represent and defend the interests of socialism internationally. Lenin further said that we were not alone. This is shown by the events in Austria, as well as by our comrades in all the countries of Europe, who, although repressed just now, are doing their work.

Newspaper account of speech at a meeting of mobilised soldiers, July 2, 1918. Pravda, No. 135, July 4, 1918.

#### THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

DEALING with Russia's international position, Lenin said that it continued to be dangerous: the foreign enemy was not only threatening to attack Russia but was already tearing pieces from her.

This unstable and precarious situation would probably continue until capital was overthrown by the efforts of the working class of the whole world. The present moment must be taken advantage of as a breathing space in which to consolidate the Soviet regime.

Speaking of the World War, Lenin stated that the victory of German arms was making peace between the imperialist countries impossible. The British and French capitalists could not reconcile themselves to Germany retaining the huge booty she had seized. Moreover, after a series of offensives in France, where Germany lost hundreds of thousands of men, a certain balance of forces had ensued, and German bayonets no longer constituted a direct menace. Besides, the Entente imperialists were fully alive to the disruption and catastrophic state of affairs that had supervened in Austria-Hungary.

There was one conclusion to be drawn from the general state of affairs, and that was that the war was becoming hopeless. This hopelessness was a pledge that our socialist revolution had a very good chance of holding on until the world revolution broke out; and the guarantee of this was the war, which only the working masses could end. Our task was to maintain the Soviet regime intact; and, by retreating and manœuvring, that is what we were doing. To go into open battle at this juncture would damage the position of the world revolution.

Describing the economic state of the country as we have inherited it from the various Right parties formerly in power, Lenin spoke of the great difficulties that would attend the work of economic development organised on new lines. In the struggle against famine, he said, we have two enemies: the rich and the economic disruption. It is essential for this struggle that the poor peasant believe in a fraternal alliance with the workers. He will believe only deeds, not words. Our only hope here lies in an alliance of the class-conscious urban workers with the poor peasants. The aim of this struggle—the right of all to bread and the right to fair distribution—is a great aim. The ability to distribute equably is the foundation of socialism, which we are building. For this we are answerable not only to our brothers, but to the workers of the whole world.

They must be shown that socialism is not something impossible, but a firm workers' system for which the proletariat of the whole world must strive.

Newspaper account of speech to Communist deputies of the Fifth Soviet Congress, July 3, 1918.

Pravda, No. 135, July 4, 1918.

## THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

COMRADES, permit me, even though the previous speaker was at times extremely excited, to submit my report on behalf of the Council of People's Commissars in the usual way, that is, to deal with the main questions of principle in the order they merit, and not enter into the controversy which the previous speaker would so much like, and which, of course, I have no intention of declining altogether. You know that since the last congress, the chief factor which determined our position, changed our policy and shaped our tactics and attitudes towards certain other parties in Russia has been the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk.

You will recall how many reproaches were hurled at us at the last congress, how many accusations were levelled at us, and how many voices were raised declaring that this famous respite would not help Russia, that in any case an international imperialist alliance had been concluded, and that the retreat we were heading for would lead to nothing practical. This basic factor determined the whole position of the capitalist states, too, and we must naturally dwell on it. I think that the past three and a half months have made it absolutely patent and undeniable that we were right; and we may say that the peasantry and the proletariat, which do not exploit others, do not profit by the hunger of the people, are entirely and unreservedly on our side, and at any rate are against those unwise people who are against the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, and who would embroil them in war.

Nine-tenths of the people are on our side, and the clearer the situation becomes, the more indisputable it is that now, when the West-European imperialist groups, the two chief imperialist groups, are locked in a life and death struggle, when with every month, every week, every day they are pushing each other nearer and nearer to the abyss whose outlines we can clearly perceive; at such a time it is

clearer than ever to us that our tactics were right. That is best felt and realised by those who have been through the war, who have seen what war means and do not talk about it in airy terms. To us it is perfectly clear that we must wait, as long as each of these groups is stronger than we are, and as long as that radical change which will permit the workers and the labouring people of Russia to enjoy the fruits of the revolution, to recover from the blow that has been dealt them and to rise to their full stature, so as to create a new, organised and disciplined army on new lines, in order that we may, not in words, but in deeds . . . (loud applause on the left. Voice from the right: "Kerensky!"), as long as that radical change has not supervened. Therefore, the deeper we go down among the masses of the people, and the nearer we get to the workers of the mills and factories and to the toiling masses—the peasants who do not exploit hired labour, do not defend profiteering, kulak interests, do not conceal their grain and are not afraid of the food dictatorship—the more surely may we say that there too we shall meet, in fact we may say with absolute conviction that we have already met, with full sympathy and unanimous accord. Yes, it is a fact that the people now do not want to fight, cannot fight, and will not fight these enemies—the imperialists—however much some may try, in their ignorance or infatuation for phrases, to drive them into this war, and no matter what catchwords they may use as a camouflage. No, comrades, whoever now calls for war directly or indirectly, in open or veiled form, whoever howls about the Brest-Litovsk Peace being a noose, fails to see that it is Kerensky and the landlords, capitalists and kulaks who are putting a noose around the necks of the workers and peasants of Russia... (Voice: "Mirbach!" \* Commotion.) Let them scream, as they do at every meeting; among the people their cause is hopeless!

I am not a bit surprised that, in view of the predicament these people are in, the only way they can answer is by shouts, hysterical outcries, abuse and wild extravagances, seeing that they have no other arguments....(Voice: "We have arguments!" Commotion.)

Ninety-nine out of every hundred Russian soldiers know what incredible suffering it cost to get the upperhand in this war. They know that in order to put war on a new socialist and economic basis (cries of, "Mirbach won't let youl") tremendous effort will be required, and, first of all, we have to master the piratical war. Knowing that the frenzied

German ambassador to Soviet Union.—Ed.

forces of imperialism are continuing to fight, and that in the three months since the last congress they have moved several steps nearer to the abyss, they will not join this war. After we had performed our duty to all the nations, realising the value of a declaration of peace and bringing its value home to the workers of all countries through our Brest-Litovsk delegation, headed by Comrade Trotsky, when we openly proposed an honest democratic peace, this proposal was frustrated by the frenzied bourgeoisie of all countries. Our position cannot be any other but to wait, and the people will yet see these frenzied imperialist cliques, strong though they still are today, tumble into the abyss which they are now nearing, as everybody can see. ... (Applause.) Anyone who does not deliberately close his eyes can see that. In these three and a half months, during which the insensate imperialist party has been doing its best to drag out the war, this abyss has undoubtedly drawn nearer. We know, feel, and realise that we are not yet ready for war; that is what the soldiers, the men under arms, who know what war means in practice, are saying. And as for the cries that we should throw off the Brest-Litovsk noose at once-they come from the Mensheviks, the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and the followers of Kerensky, the Cadets. You know where the followers of the landlords and the capitalists, where the hangers-on of the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and Cadets still stand. In that camp, the speeches of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, who also incline towards war, will be greeted with loud applause. The Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, as the previous speakers have said, find themselves in an awkward predicament: they have landed in the wrong place. (Applause.)

We know that great revolutions rise from deep down among the depths of the people, that this takes months and years, and we are not surprised that in the course of the revolution the Left Socialist-Revolutionary party has shown such incredible vacillations. Trotsky has told us about these vacillations here, and it only remains for me to add that on October 26, when we invited the Left Socialist-Revolutionary comrades to join the government, they refused, and when [General] Krasnov was at the gates of Petrograd, they were not with us, with the consequent result that they helped not us, but Krasnov. We are not surprised at these vacillations. Yes, this party has been through a great deal. But there is a limit to everything.

We know that revolution is a thing that is learned by experience and practice, that a revolution becomes a real revolution only when

tens of millions of people rise up with one accord, as one man. (Lenin's words are drowned by applause. Cries of: "Long live the Soviets!") This struggle, which is raising us to a new life, has been begun by one hundred and fifteen million people: this great struggle must be examined with the utmost attention. (Loud applause.) In October, when the Soviet regime was founded, on October 26, 1917, when ... (commotion and applause) our party and its representatives on the Central Executive Committee invited the Left Socialist-Revolutionary party to join the government, it refused. When the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries refused to join our government they were not with us, but against us. (Commotion on the Left Socialist-Revolutionary benches.) I am very sorry to have to say things you do not like. (The commotion on the right becomes louder.) But what's to be done? If Krasnov, the Cossack general... (the outcries prevent Lenin from continuing sentence). When, on October 26, you vacillated, not knowing yourselves what you wanted, and refused to join us ... (commotion lasting several minutes). The truth is hard to swallow! Let me remind you that those who vacillated, who do not know themselves what they want and refuse to join us, willingly listen to the fables of others. I have told you that the soldier who has been in the war ... (commotion and applause). When the previous speaker had the floor the vast majority of the delegates did not interrupt her. Well, it is only to be expected. If these people prefer to withdraw from the congress, well, then, good riddance! (Commotion and excitement continues.)

And so the whole course of events has shown that we were right in concluding the Brest-Litovsk Peace. And those who tried at the last Congress of Soviets to crack feeble jokes about the respite have seen and learnt that we have secured a breathing space; true, it cost us incredible effort, but during this breathing space our workers and peasants have taken a tremendous step forward to socialist construction, while the Western powers, on the contrary, have taken a tremendous step toward that abyss for which imperialism is heading faster and faster with every week of this war.

And so the only way I can explain the conduct of those who denounce our tactics because of the difficulty of our situation is that they are completely bewildered. I repeat that one only has to recall the past three and a half months. I would remind those who were at the last congress of some of the things that were said there, and would recommend those who were not to read the minutes or the newspaper reports of that congress, which will convince them that events have fully corroborated our tactics. There can be no boundary line between the victories of the October Revolution and the victories of the international socialist revolution; outbursts are bound to begin in other countries. And in order to hasten them we did all we could in the Brest-Litovsk period. Those who have been through the revolutions of 1905 and 1917, those who have pondered over them and examined them thoughtfully and seriously, will know that although these revolutions in our country followed closely on each other they were engendered with incredible difficulty.

Two months before January, 1905, or February, 1917, no revolutionary, whatever his experience and knowledge, however familiar he was with the life of the people, could have foreseen such an explosion in Russia. To grasp upon individual dissatisfactions and launch appeals to the masses which are tantamount to terminating the peace and plunging us into war is the policy of people who are utterly bewildered and have lost their heads completely. And to prove that this is so, I will cite the words of a person whose sincerity neither I nor anybody else will question—the words of Comrade Spiridonova, from the speech which was published in the Golos Trudovovo Krestyanstva [Voice of the Working Peasant] and which has not been repudiated. In this speech, delivered on June 30, Comrade Spiridonova inserted three meaningless lines to the effect that the Germans had presented us with an ultimatum to deliver to them three billions rubles' worth of textiles.

A party which drives its most sincere representatives into such an awful quagmire of lies and deceit, such a party is absolutely doomed. The workers and peasants cannot help knowing what tremendous effort and anguish it costs us to sign the Brest-Litovsk Treaty. Surely, it is not necessary to exaggerate the hardships of that peace by the kind of fables and fabrications to which even the sincerest members of that party resort. But we know what the true sentiments of the people are and guide ourselves accordingly, while they writhe in hysterics. From that standpoint, conduct inspired by such utter bewilderment is worse than any provocation. Especially if we compare all the parties of Russia as a whole, which a scientific attitude towards the revolution demands. You must never neglect to examine the relations of all the parties as a whole. Individual persons or groups may be mistaken, may be at fault, may not be able to explain their own conduct; but if we

take the parties of Russia as a whole and examine their mutual relations, there can be no mistake. Just see what the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, Kerensky, Savinkov and the rest, are saying now, when they hear the appeals of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries.... Why, they applaud like mad. They would be glad to embroil Russia in a war just now, when it would suit Milyukov's \* purpose. And to talk like that, to talk about the Brest-Litovsk Peace being a noose just now, is to cast the landlord's noose around the neck of the Russian peasant. When they talk here about a struggle against the Bolsheviks, like the previous speaker who spoke about a quarrel with the Bolsheviks, my reply is: No, comrades, this is no quarrel, but a genuine and irrevocable rupture, a rupture between those who are bearing the whole onus of the situation by telling the people the truth, and not allowing themselves to be intoxicated by outcries, and those who are intoxicating themselves with such outcries and involuntarily doing the work of the enemy, the work of provocateurs.

I will now conclude the first part of my report. During these three and a half months of frantic imperialist war, the imperialist states have drawn nearer to the abyss into which they are driving the people. This wounded beast has torn many a lump of flesh from our living organism. Our enemies are nearing this abyss so fast that even if they had more than three and a half months at their disposal, and even if the imperialist carnage were again to inflict just as heavy losses on us, it is they who would perish, not we; for the rapidity with which their power of resistance is diminishing is rapidly drawing them nearer the abyss.

We, on the other hand, in spite of the tremendous difficulties, which we do not conceal from the people, after these three and a half months can show many healthy signs of a healthy organism; both in industry and everywhere else, plodding constructive work is going on, unpretentious and unsensational though it may be. It has already yielded very fruitful results, and, given another three months, six months, a whole winter season of such work, we will march forward, while the West-European imperialist beast, worn out by the struggle will be unable to stand such a contest, because within it forces are maturing which, although they have no faith in themselves as yet, will lead imperialism to its doom. And what has already been begun there, and begun radically and fundamentally, is not likely to be changed in three

<sup>•</sup> Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Provisional Government.—Ed.

and a half months. Far too little is being said about this plodding, constructive, creative work, and it seems to me that we should talk about it more. I, for my part, cannot pass over this fact in silence, if only because the attacks of the previous speaker must be taken into account. I would mention the resolution of the Central Executive Committee of April 29, 1918. \* At that time, I made a speech in which I spoke of the immediate tasks of the Soviet government, † and I pointed out that, notwithstanding the incredible difficulties of our position, prime attention at home must be given to constructive work.

And here we must cherish no illusions, and must say that for all its difficulties, all our efforts must be devoted to this work. Our experience, which I can tell you about, shows that in this respect we have undoubtedly made big strides ahead. To be sure, if we look only for outward results, as the bourgeoisie does, seizing on our individual mistakes, one can scarcely speak of success. But we look at it from a totally different angle. The bourgeoisie picks on the administration of the river fleet, for example, and points out how often we have set about reconstructing it, and proclaims with malicious glee that the Soviet government cannot cope with the job. To which I reply that it is true that we have time and again reconstructed the administration of our river fleet, as we have the administration of the railways, and now are about to undertake an even bigger reconstruction of the Council of National Economy. That is the whole meaning of the revolutionsocialism has passed from the sphere of dogma, about which only people can speak who do not understand anything at all, from the sphere of book knowledge, of a program, to the sphere of practical work. And today the workers and peasants are making socialism with their own hands.

The times have passed, and in Russia, I am sure, have passed beyond recall, when we used to argue about socialist programs on the basis of book knowledge. Today socialism can be discussed only on the basis of experience. Therein lies the whole meaning of the revolution; it has for the first time in history discarded the old apparatus of bourgeois officialdom, the bourgeois system of administration, and has created conditions which enable the workers and peasants themselves to set

<sup>\*</sup> See V. I. Lenin, "Theses on the Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government," Collected Works, Vol. XXII (Russian ed).—Ed.

<sup>†</sup> See V. I. Lenin, "Report of the Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government," Collected Works, Vol. XXII (Russian ed.)—Ed.

about this job, a job of incredible difficulty, difficulties it would be absurd to conceal from ourselves; for the capitalists and landlords have for centuries been hounding and persecuting tens of millions of people even for harbouring the thought of administrating the land.

Now, in the space of a few weeks, a few months, in the midst of desperate and frightful disruption, when the whole body of Russia has been bruised and battered by the war, so that the people are like a man who has been thrashed within an inch of his life—at such a time, when the tsars, the landlords, and the capitalists have left us with a country in a state of utter disruption, the new job, the new work of building must be shouldered by the new classes, by the workers and the peasants who do not exploit hired workers and do not profiteer in grain. Yes, this is an extremely difficult task, but an extremely grateful one. Every month of such work and such experience is worth ten if not twenty years of our history. Yes, we are not afraid to confess that which an acquaintance with our decrees will show—that we have constantly to alter them; we have not yet produced anything finished and complete; we do not yet know a socialism that can be embodied in clauses and paragraphs. If we are now able to submit a Soviet Constitution 7 to this congress, it is only because Soviets have been set up and tested in all parts of the country, because you yourselves have created that constitution and tested it in all parts of the country; and it is only six months after the October Revolution, and nearly a year after the First All-Russian Congress of Soviets that we are able to inscribe what already exists in practice.

In the economic sphere, where we are only just beginning to build socialism and where a new discipline must be built up, we have no such experience—we are acquiring it by dint of alteration and reconstruction. That is our prime task. We say that every new social order demands new relations between man and man, a new discipline. There was a time when economic life was impossible without feudal discipline, when there was only one kind of discipline—the discipline of the lash; and there was the time of the rule of the capitalists, when the disciplinary force was starvation. But now, with the Soviet revolution, with the beginning of the socialist revolution, discipline must be built on entirely new principles; it must be a discipline of faith in the organising power of the workers and poor peasants, a discipline of comradeship, a discipline of the utmost mutual respect, a discipline of independence and initiative in the struggle. Whoever resorts to the old

capitalist methods, whoever at a time of famine and want argues in the old, capitalist way—if I sell grain on my own hook I will make a bigger profit; if I set out on my own hook to get grain, I shall get it easier—whoever argues in that way may be choosing the easier road, but he will never arrive at socialism.

It is simple and easy to keep within the old realm of customary capitalist relations; but we want to take a new road. It is one which demands of us and of all the people a high level of enlightenment and organisation; it demands more time and involves graver mistakes. But we say that only those make no mistakes who attempt nothing practical.

If, in the opinion of the meeting, the period under review includes experiments in which one frequently meets with changes, amendments, reversions to the old, that is not the chief thing, the chief meaning and value of this period. The old government apparatus of bureaucrats, for whom it was enough to order an increase of salary, is a thing of the past. We have now to deal with workers' organisations which are taking economic administration into their own hands. We have to deal with the railway workers, who used to be the worst off, and who have a legitimate right to demand an improvement of conditions. Tomorrow the river transport workers will submit their demands, and the day after the middle peasants—I shall speak of them at greater length—who often feel they are worse off than the worker, whom we treat with the utmost attention, and to whose interest all our decrees are devoted—a thing the previous speaker has absolutely failed to grasp.

All this creates enormous difficulties, but they are difficulties which are due to the fact that the workers and poor peasants for the first time in centuries are themselves, with their own hands, organising the whole economic life of Russia. And so, we have to find ways of satisfying just demands; we have to alter decrees and reconstruct the system of administration. And when, side by side with cases of mistakes and failure—cases which the bourgeois press seizes upon and which, of course, are numerous—we achieve successes, we learn by these partial mistakes and failures, we learn by experience how to build the edifice of socialism. And when we are showered with new demands from all sides, we say: That is as it should be, that is just what socialism means, when each wants to improve his condition and all want to enjoy the benefits of life. But the country is poor, the country is poverty-stricken, and it is impossible just now to satisfy all demands;

that is why it is so difficult to build the new edifice in the midst of disruption. But those who believe that socialism can be built at a time of peace and tranquillity are profoundly mistaken: it will everywhere be built at a time of disruption, at a time of famine. That is how it must be. And when we see before us people with real ideas, we say: All the thousands, tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands of workers and labouring peasants have set about building the new socialist edifice with their own hands.

A profound revolution is now beginning in the countryside, where the kulaks are agitating and trying to interfere with the labouring peasants who do not exploit the labour of others or profiteer in grain. and there the task is different. In the cities the thing is to organise the factories, the metal industry; and what with the havoc of the war, to distribute production, to distribute raw stuffs and materials is a very difficult task. There the workers are learning to do this and are forming central organs of administration; there we are having to reconstruct the Supreme Council of National Economy; for the old laws, passed at the beginning of the year, are already out of date, the workers' movement is marching ahead, the old workers' control is already antiquated, and the trade unions are becoming the embryos of organs for the administration of all industry. In this sphere quite a lot has already been done, but still we cannot boast of any brilliant successes. We know that in this sphere the bourgeois elements, the capitalists, landlords and kulaks, will for a long time yet have the opportunity to carry on their propaganda and repeat that, as usual, a decree has been passed but is not being enforced; another has only just been passed, yet it is already being altered; while profiteering is going on just the same as under capitalism. Yes, it is true that we do not know of any universal quack panacea for putting an end to profiteering at one stroke. The habits of the capitalist system are too strong; to reeducate the people who have been brought up to these habits for centuries is no easy matter and will take a long time. But we say that our fighting weapon is organisation. We must organise everything, take everything into our own hands, keep tabs on the kulaks and profiteers at every step, declare implacable war on them and never allow them to breathe freely, controlling their every move.

We know from experience that alterations of decrees are unavoidable, for new difficulties are encountered which are a source of fresh changes. And if in the matter of food supply we have now arrived

at the point of organising the poor peasants, and if our former comrades, the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, say in all sincerity—which cannot be doubted—that our ways have parted, our firm reply to them is: All the worse for you, for that means that you have turned your back on socialism.

The food question is the main question; it is the one to which we are devoting most attention in our work. A host of small measures which are imperceptible to the outsider, but which the Council of People's Commissars has adopted—such as the steps to improve the water and rail transport systems, the clearing up of the war commissariat stores, the fight against profiteering—were all directed towards putting the food supply on a proper footing. Not only our country, but even the most civilised countries, which never knew what famine meant before the war, are now all in a state of utmost distress, created by the imperialists in their struggle for the supremacy of one group or another. In the West, tens of millions of people are suffering the pangs of starvation. The war has reduced the people to such a state that the social revolution is finding expression not in a program, but in the fact that tens of millions of people are saying: Rather than live and starve, we prefer to die for the revolution.

You know what colossal difficulties the food question is giving rise to, what frightful hardships have overtaken us, and how often we hear of capitalists revolting against the Soviet government! You know that the Czechoslovak mutiny is a mutiny of people bought by the British and French imperialists. We are constantly hearing of revolts against the Soviets in one place or another. The kulak risings are spreading from region to region. In the Don region, there is Krasnov, whom the Russian workers magnanimously allowed to go free in Petrograd when he came and surrendered his sword, for the prejudices of the intellectual are still strong and the intellectuals protested against capital punishment-Krasnov was allowed to go free because of the intellectuals' prejudice against capital punishment. But today, I would like to see a people's court, a workers' or peasants' court, which would not sentence to death Krasnov, who is shooting workers and peasants. We are told that when people are sentenced to be shot by Dzerzhinsky's commission \* it is all right, but if a court were to declare publicly and openly that a man is a counter-revolutionary and deserves to be shot,

<sup>•</sup> The Extraordinary Commission to Combat Counter-Revolution which was headed by Felix Dzerzhinsky, a member of the Soviet Government.—Ed.

that would be wrong. People who have sunk to such depths of hypocrisy are political corpses. No, a revolutionary who does not want to be a hypocrite cannot renounce capital punishment. There has never been a revolution or a period of civil war without shootings.

Our food supply has been reduced to an almost catastrophic state. We have reached the direst period in our revolution. We are facing the most distressful period of all—there never has been a more difficult one in workers' and peasants' Russia—the period that remains until the harvest. I have seen plenty of party differences and revolutionary disputes in my day, and I am not surprised to find in such a time of stress an increasing number of people who are giving way to hysterics and crying: "I will resign from the Soviets," and who talk of decrees abolishing capital punishment. But he is a poor revolutionary who at a time of acute struggle is halted by the immutability of a law. In a period of transition, laws have only a temporary validity; and when a law hinders the development of the revolution, it must be abolished or amended.

The nearer famine approaches, the clearer it becomes that this desperate calamity must be combated by equally desperate measures. Socialism, I repeat, has ceased to be a dogma, just as it has perhaps ceased to be a program. Our party has not yet drawn up a new program, but the old one is already worthless. The proper and equable distribution of bread—that is what constitutes the basis of socialism today. The war has bequeathed to us a legacy of economic disruption; the kind efforts of Kerensky and the landlords and kulaks-who say, "After us the deluge"—have reduced the country to such a state that they say, "The worse it is, the better." The war has bequeathed us such hardships that the very essence of the whole socialist system lies in this matter of the food supply, and we must take this matter into our hands and find a practical solution for it. And we ask ourselves what is to be done about bread: Are we to continue along the old, capitalist lines, with peasants taking advantage of the situation and making thousands of rubles profit out of grain, at the same time calling themselves labouring peasants, and sometimes even Left Socialist-Revolutionaries? (Applause and commotion.) They argue like this: If people are starving, grain prices will rise; if the towns are starving, I will stuff my pockets; and if the starvation becomes worse, I will make thousands more. But I know very well that individuals are not to blame for arguing in this way. The whole

abominable heritage of landlord and capitalist society has taught people to argue, think and live like this; and to reform the life of tens of millions of people is frightfully difficult; it will require long and persistent work, and this work we have only just begun. We would never think of blaming people who, tormented by hunger and seeing no benefit in the organisation of a socialist system of bread distribution, scurry to look after themselves and let everything else go hang. These people cannot be blamed. But we do say that when it is a case of representatives of parties, of people belonging to a definite party, of large bodies of people, we expect them to look at the matter, not from the standpoint of the suffering, tormented, hungry individual, against whom nobody would think of raising his hand, but from the standpoint of the building of a new society.

I repeat, it is not possible to build socialism when everything is running smoothly and tranquilly; it is not possible to bring about socialism without the landlords and capitalists putting up a furious resistance. The worse our situation is, the more gleefully they rub their hands and the more they resort to revolt; the worse our situation is and the more saboteurs there are in our midst, the more eagerly they embark on all kinds of Czechoslovak and Krasnov affairs. And we say that the old way is not the way to cope with this, hard though it may be to drag the cart forward, uphill, instead of allowing it to slip back downhill. We know very well that not a week or even a day passed without the Council of People's Commissars considering the food problem, without our issuing thousands of recommendations, orders and decrees, and discussing how to combat famine. Some say there is no need for special prices, for fixed prices, for a grain monopoly: Give people a free hand to trade. The rich will get richer still, and if the poor die of starvation, well, they always have. But a Socialist cannot argue that way; at this moment, when the hill is steeper than ever and the cart has to be dragged up the steepest inclines, socialism has ceased to be a matter of party differences and has become a practical issue; it is a question of whether we can hold out against the kulaks, by allying ourselves with the peasants who do not profiteer in grain; it is a question of whether we can hold out now, when we have to fight, and work of the heaviest kind lies ahead of us.

They talk about the Committees of Poor Peasants. Those who have seen the torments of hunger for themselves will clearly realise that in order to break and ruthlessly crush the kulaks, the most drastic and ruthless measures are required. When we proceeded to organise unions of poor peasants, we fully realised what a severe and drastic measure this was; but only an alliance of the towns with the rural poor and with those who have stocks but do not profiteer, with those who want to cope vigorously with the difficulties and insure that the grain surpluses go to the state and are distributed among the working people—only such an alliance is the right method, the sole method of waging this struggle. And the way to wage this struggle is not by means of programs and speeches; this struggle with famine will show who is following the direct route to socialism, despite all trials and hardships, and who is succumbing to the trickery and knavery of the kulaks.

If there are people in the Left Socialist-Revolutionary Party who, like the previous speaker—one of the sincerest, and therefore one who is most liable to be carried away, most subject to changes of opinion-say that they cannot work with the Bolsheviks and are quitting, we shall not regret it for a minute. Socialists who quit at a moment like this, when tens and thousands of people are dying of hunger while others have large surpluses of grain which they had not sold even before last August when the fixed prices for grain were doubled-against which the whole democracy protested-those who know that the people are suffering untold pangs of hunger yet do not want to sell their grain at the price at which the middle peasants are selling it are enemies of the people. They are bent on condemning the revolution to its doom and are lending their support to violent oppression—they are friends of the capitalists! War on such people, relentless war on them! (General applause, joined by a large number of Left Socialist-Revolutionaries.)

A thousand times wrong, a thousand times mistaken is he who allows himself even for a moment to be carried away by enemy talk and to say that this is a fight against the peasantry—as incautious or thoughtless Left Socialist-Revolutionaries sometimes do. No, this is a fight to save socialism and properly to distribute bread in Russia.

(Voices: "What about goods?")

We will fight in alliance with the overwhelming majority of the peasants; we shall win this fight, and then every European worker will see in practice what socialism means. Everyone will help us in this struggle, everyone who, even though he may not know scientifically what socialism means, nevertheless knows that he has been

toiling all his life and that he earned his bread at a hard price. He will understand us. That man will be on our side.

As to the kulaks who possess surpluses of grain and are capable of concealing that grain at a moment of extreme national hardship, at a moment when all the gains of the revolution are at stake, when the Skoropadskys of every hue and in every part of the country, occupied or not, are craning their necks and only waiting for the moment to overthrow the power of the workers and peasants by famine, and reinstate the landlords—at such a moment it is our cardinal socialist duty to proclaim ruthless war on the kulaks. He is a poor Socialist who at this moment of grave difficulty and severe trial for the starving people and for the socialist revolution washes his hands of it, and repeats the lying tales of the bourgeoisie.

It is false, a thousand times false, to say this is a fight against the peasantry! I have seen this said hundreds of times in the columns of the Cadet newspapers, and I am not surprised to hear them crying that the workers have split with the peasantry. When they hysterically cry: "Peasants, open your eyes, come to your senses and have done with the Bolsheviks!"—when I hear and read things like this, I am not at all surprised. There it is quite in place. These people are serving the master it is their function to serve. But I would not like to be in the skin of a Socialist who sinks to talk like this! (Loud applause.)

We fully realise what incredible difficulties the solution of the food problem entails. Here the prejudices are most profound; here the interests are most deep-rooted—kulak interests; here division, stagnation, the scattered character of village life, unenlightenment—all, in many cases, are united against us. But we say that in spite of these difficulties, we cannot withdraw. Famine is not a thing to be trifled with; and if the masses of the people do not receive assistance in this famine, hunger is capable of driving them even into the arms of Skoropadsky.

It is false to say that this is a fight against the peasantry! Whoever says that is an out-and-out criminal; those who have allowed themselves to be driven by hysteria to such talk are victims of a terrible calamity. No, we are not even fighting the middle peasant, let alone the poor peasant. All over Russia, the middle peasants have only the smallest surpluses of grain. The middle peasants have for decades before the revolution lived worse than the workers. Before the revolution their life was one of unrelieved want and oppression. Our policy

towards these middle peasants is one of agreement. The socialist revolution means equality for all the labouring masses. It would be unfair for the urban worker to receive more than the middle peasant. who does not exploit the labour of others by hiring labour or profiteering. The peasants suffer from greater want and oppression than the workers, and fare even worse than the workers. They have no organisations or trade unions to work for the improvement of their conditions. Even with the workers' unions we find it necessary to hold dozens of meetings with the object of levelling out wages among the various trades, and all the same cannot get them levelled. Every sensible worker knows that this will require a long time. See how many complaints are received by the Commissariat of Labour! You will find that every trade is raising its head; they do not want to live in the old way; they do not want to live like slaves, they say. In this poverty-stricken, destitute country we want to heal the wounds it has suffered. We must somehow or other save economic life, which has almost completely broken down. This can only be done by organisation. In order to organise the peasantry, we issued the decree about the Committees of Poor Peasants. Only the enemies of socialism can be opposed to this decree. We said that we considered it fair to lower the price of textiles. We are registering and nationalising positively everything. And that will permit us to regulate the distribution of the products of industry.

We said: Cut the prices of textiles for the poor peasants by half, and for the middle peasants by 25 per cent. Perhaps these scales are wrong. We do not claim that our solution of the problem is right. We do not say that. To solve the problem you must do it together. (Applause.) Sitting in your armchairs in the chief administration offices, fighting profiteering and trying to catch swindlers who are doing their dirty work in secret is not going to solve the problem.

Only when the Food Commissariat, in conjunction with the Commissariat of Agriculture, nationalises all goods and fixes prices do we begin to come close up to socialism. It is only the working people of the towns and the rural poor, all those who labour, do not rob others, do not exploit the labour of others either by hiring or by profiteering, that are coming closer to it, for the man who demands a hundred rubles or more for grain is no less a profiteer than he who employs hired labour; perhaps he is even a worse, a more arrant profiteer.

After a desperately difficult half-year of Soviet rule, we have now got to the organisation of the poor peasants. It is a pity we did not get there after half a week-that is where we are to blame! If the reproach was that we had delayed the decree on the organisation of the poor peasants and the food dictatorship six months, we would have welcomed the reproof. We say that only now that we have taken this path has socialism ceased to be a mere phrase and is becoming a practical thing. It is possible that the decree is unhappily conceived, that the scales are wrong. How were we to determine them? Only by your experience. How many times have we altered the railwaymen's scales, even though they have their trade unions, whereas the poor peasants have none! Let us cooperate in checking whether the scales laid down in the decree on the poor peasants are right, whether it is right to lower prices for the poor peasants by half and for the middle peasants by a quarter, and to take everything away from the rich peasants-whether these scales are right or not.

If there is to be a fight, we shall wage that fight by bold decrees without hesitating for a moment. It will be a real fight for socialismnot for a dogma, not for a program, for a party, for a faction, but for living socialism, for the distribution of bread among hundreds of thousands and millions of starving people in the foremost districts of Russia, for taking grain wherever it is to be found and distributing it properly. I repeat, we do not doubt for a moment that ninetynine peasants out of every hundred, when they learn the truth, when they receive the decree, test it, try it in practice and tell us how to correct it—and we will correct it, we will alter the scales—when they tackle this job and get an idea of its practical difficulty, these peasants will be on our side and will say that we are displaying the healthy instinct of the labouring man, and that this, and only this, will decide the real issue, the fundamental and vital issue-socialism. We will establish proper prices for goods, we will establish a monopoly of grain, of textiles and of all products; and then the people will say: "Yes, the distribution of labour, the distribution of bread and other products inaugurated by socialism is better than it was before." And that is what the people are beginning to say. We are able to overcome obstacles, in spite of a host of difficulties, a host of mistakes, in spite of incidents which we make no attempt to conceal, but rather drag into the light and hold up to shame—cases when our detachments themselves succumb to profiteering, sink down into that slippery

gulf into which all the capitalist habits and customs tend to drag people. Yes, there are such cases everywhere; we know that people cannot be remoulded all at once, that you cannot inspire tens of millions of people with faith in socialism all at once. From where are they to get this faith? Not out of their own heads, surely? No, from their experience. But in spite of all this, people are beginning to say that bread can be secured without profiteering, and that the only salvation from famine lies in an alliance of the urban, factory, industrial workers with the poor peasants, for only the poor peasant does not profiteer in grain. Yes, as soon as the middle peasant sees our decrees, reads them for himself, compares them with the talk and slanders of the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and the champions of the kulak, he will say that in establishing one scale for the poor peasants and another for the middle peasants, and in taking grain from the kulaks without compensation we are acting rightly. He may not say that we are acting like Socialists—he may not know that word but he is our sure ally, for he does not profiteer in grain, and he will realise and agree that to profiteer in grain at a moment of direst danger to the socialist revolution is a heinous crime against the people.

Bread cannot be distributed by decree. But when, after long and persistent effort in establishing and improving an alliance of the factory, urban workers with the rural poor, with the labouring peasants who do not hire any labourers and do not engage in profiteering, we get it properly going, no hysterical outcries against our party will succeed in rupturing that alliance. (Applause.)

When we promised these peasants and actually introduced the socialisation of the land, we made a concession; but we understood that socialisation cannot be introduced at one stroke. We know that we may have made a mistake in embodying your socialisation of the land in our law of October 26. \* It was a concession to the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, who refused to join the government and said they would only remain if this law were passed. Spiridonova is a thousand times wrong in bringing forward unconnected facts and saying that she came to see me, humbled herself and implored. Comrades, many of you have been to see me and know that that cannot have been the case, that no comrade could have been treated

<sup>•</sup> See V. I. Lenin, Selected Works (International Publishers, N. Y.), Vol. VI, p. 405.—Ed.

like that. It must be a bad party indeed whose best spokesmen stoop to spreading fairy tales. (Commotion.)

I have a letter from Comrade Spiridonova—she has often written to me. I shall find that letter tomorrow and make it known. She writes: "Why do you refuse to grant two millions for agricultural communes?" And this on the very day when Sereda, the People's Commissar of Agriculture, whose work she does not understand, submitted a proposal to assign ten millions for agricultural communes. (Prolonged applause.) You heard Comrade Spiridonova say the same thing in her speech; but it must be a bad party indeed whose sincerest people stoop to spreading fairy tales for propaganda purposes. I repeat, it must be a bad party indeed whose best and sincerest spokesmen go to the length of spreading such fairy tales about the Soviet government! All the worse for them! Every peasant who comes to the Commissariat of Agriculture and reads that ten millions have been assigned for agricultural communes will see and believe his own eyes and ears more than inimical speeches, and will understand that these people have sunk so low as to spread fairy tales, and he will turn his back on this party. (Applause.)

I want to say only one thing in concluding my speech. Until the new harvest, until that harvest is brought to the starving localities of Petrograd and Moscow, a hard period of the Russian revolution lies before us. A really close alliance between the urban workers and the rural poor, the rural labouring masses who do not profiteer in grain, is the only thing that can save the revolution.

Our congress shows that in spite of everything the alliance of all the working people is growing, spreading and gaining strength not only in Russia but all over the world. Absurdly little, terribly little is known abroad about our revolution. The military censorship there lets nothing through. The comrade who returned from abroad has told us that; yet, in spite of everything, guided by sheer instinct, the European workers sympathise with the Bolshevik government. And ever more numerous voices are showing that sympathy for the socialist revolution is growing in Europe in the countries where the imperialist war is still in progress. The Bolshevik government is receiving expressions of gratitude, sympathy and support from German Socialists and other men and women whose names are known to every enlightened worker and peasant, people like Clara Zetkin and Franz Mehring. In Italy, Lazzari, the old secretary of the party, who at

Zimmerwald \* regarded the Bolsheviks with mistrust, is now in prison for having expressed his sympathy with us.

Understanding of the revolution is growing. In France, comrades and workers who at the Zimmerwald Conference had treated the Bolsheviks with profound mistrust the other day issued a manifesto, in the name of the Committee of International Relations, earnestly appealing for support of the Bolshevik government and discountenancing adventures by any party.

And so, comrades, however difficult and arduous the period that lies ahead of us may be, it is our duty to tell the truth and to open people's eyes to this, for only the people, by their initiative and organisation, by advancing demand after demand and defending the socialist republic, can help us. And we say, comrades, that there is not a shadow of doubt that if we follow the path which we have chosen and which events have confirmed, if we follow this path firmly and unswervingly, if we do not allow ourselves to be diverted from the right path by any phrasemongering, illusions, deceit or hysterics, we have every chance in the world of maintaining our position and of resolutely furthering the victory of socialism in Russia, and thus furthering the victory of the world socialist revolution! (Loud and prolonged applause and cheers.)

#### REPLY TO THE DISCUSSION

When it was said here that the Bolsheviks are yielding and that their reports contained nothing of practical value, I recalled the words uttered here by one Socialist Revolutionary, a Maximalist, I think he was, to the effect that the Supreme Council of National Economy is passing from the control of production to its administration. Isn't that statement of practical value? What then are those workers doing who by their own efforts, through their trade unions, have begun to learn from the owners the art of administering enterprises? You say that it is an easy thing to learn to administer, but every day we in the Supreme Council of National Economy have to settle thousands of conflicts and incidents which show that the worker has learnt a lot, and we must conclude that the workers are beginning to learn—slowly, to be sure, and with mistakes; but it is one thing to utter fine phrases,

<sup>\*</sup>The conference of internationalist Socialists from various countries, opposed to imperialist war, met at Zimmerwald, Switzerland, September, 1915.—Ed.

and another to see how, month by month, the worker is beginning to find his ground, how he is beginning to lose his timidity and to feel that he is the ruler. Rightly or wrongly, he is acting as the peasant does in an agricultural commune. Time has shown that the worker had to learn to administer industry, and all the rest is just empty talk and not worth a brass farthing. If, after six months of Soviet rule, we are now beginning to find that control is out of date, that is a big step forward.

The cry was raised here that we are marking time, or even retreating. Nothing of the kind. You may persuade the kulak of that, but not the plain worker; he knows what we mean when we say: let us have better people than you sent, get them to learn more than you. And so, when the cry is raised here about concessions, let us ask any worker or peasant what he prefers: to pay the debt the Germans imposed upon us in concessions, or to fight? When we signed the Brest-Litovsk Peace, we said of the imperialists that as long as they had not been vanquished by an international socialist revolution, we could not defend ourselves in any other way than by retreating. That is unpleasant, but it will remain a fact—and it is better to tell the people so-as long as we have not built up an army, for which we need only a few years, not decades, provided we introduce a proper system of bread distribution, so that there may be stocks of grain for the army, gathered and stored. In what county or province have the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries done that? They have done nothing of the kind! And as long as it is not done, we declare that all your cries are just empty talk, whereas when we take a step towards administration by the workers, we take a step forward. My words have been misquoted here. What I said was that it must be a bad party whose sincere members are obliged to stoop to such talk.

We have assigned a billion to our Food Commissariat—isn't that a step forward? Much still remains to be done, and you can do it if you only wish. But through whom, I do not know. Not through the old officials, surely? Our worker and peasant members of the Soviets are learning to do this, and so the purchasing and distribution of manufactured goods are getting along. Hundreds of times the Council of People's Commissars discussed the questions: Through whom to purchase textiles, how to exercise control, and how to further their most expeditious distribution. And we know that week after week measures were successfully worked out for combating profiteering and

catching profiteers, and that with every passing month the workers are acquiring a firmer mastery of this job—and this success of ours nobody can deny. We are advancing, not marking time.

On June 28, we effected nationalisation to the extent perhaps of several hundred thousand, yet you keep on objecting and repeating the talk of the bourgeois intellectuals. Socialism is not a job that can be done in a few months. We are not marking time, but are continuing to move towards socialism, and since the Brest-Litovsk Peace we have come closer to it. The workers have gained experience from a number of mistakes-they realise the gravity and difficulty of the strugglewhile the peasants have experience in the socialisation of the land, and there can be no doubt that the more experienced and intelligent peasants are saying: "In the first spring we took land for ourselves; in the autumn we'll take over the whole job, the whole business of distributing the land." Do not forget that we are selling the peasants textiles at a 50 per cent rebate, that is, at half price. Who else would have given the poor peasants textiles at such a price? We will proceed towards socialism by way of grain, textiles, and implements, which will not fall into the hands of the profiteers, but into those of the poor peasants, in the first place. That is socialism. (Applause.)

After six months of socialist revolution, people who get all their ideas from books understand nothing. We have arrived at a stage where we are taking the definite step of distributing bread and exchanging textiles for bread in such a way that it is the poor that benefit, and not the rich profiteers. We are not a bourgeois republic; if we were we should not need Soviets. It is the poor that must benefit from the distribution of grain and textiles—that is something no republic in the world has attempted, but we are attempting it now. We are doing a noble work; we have the experience; and we are doing everything in our power to get the poor to organise. Cases of extortion and hooliganism are practically disappearing; for every such case there are a dozen others when the poor peasants and the middle peasants say: We must get rid of the kulak and the landlord! Since the Brest-Litovsk Peace we have made tremendous strides in the education of the peasants, and they are now no longer novices in the struggle for socialism. (Applause.)

Report for the government to the Fifth Soviet Congress, held July 4-10, 1918.8

Published in Proceedings of Fifth Soviet Congress, 1918.

### THE REVOLT OF THE LEFT SOCIALIST-REVOLUTIONARIES

REVOLUTION with remarkable consistency drives every position to its logical conclusion and ruthlessly exposes the utter futility and criminality of all wrong tactics.

The Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, carried away by high-sounding phrases, have for several months now been screaming: "Down with the Brest-Litovsk Peace! To arms against the Germans!"

We replied that under present conditions, in the present period of history, the Russian people cannot fight and do not want to fight.

Closing their eyes to the facts, the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries continued with insane obstinacy to persist in their own line, not sensing that they were parting ways more and more with the masses of the people; and determined at all costs, even by brute force, to impose their will on these masses, the will of their Central Committee, which included criminal adventurers, hysterical intellectuals, and so on.

And the more they parted ways with the people, the more they earned the sympathies of the bourgeoisie, which hoped to accomplish its designs by their hand.

Their criminal terrorist act and revolt have fully and completely opened the eyes of the broad masses to the abyss into which the criminal tactics of the Left Socialist-Revolutionary adventurers would drag Soviet Russia, the Russia of the people.

On the day of the revolt, many comrades and I myself had occasion to hear even the most backward sections of the people expressing their profound disgust with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries.

One simple old woman said indignantly on hearing of the assassination of Mirbach: "The devils, they have driven us into war after all!"

It at once became perfectly clear and obvious to everybody that the terroristic act of the Socialist-Revolutionaries had brought Russia to

the brink of war. That, in fact, was what the masses thought of the action of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries.

They are trying by underhand methods to embroil us in war with the Germans at a time when we cannot fight and do not want to fight. The masses will never forgive the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries for trampling so brutally on the will of the people and trying to force them into war.

And if anybody was well pleased with the action of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and rubbed their hands with glee, it was only the White Guards and the servitors of the imperialist bourgeoisie. The worker and peasant masses have been rallying ever closer and more solidly around the Communist-Bolshevik Party, the authentic spokesman of the will of the masses.

Interview, Izvestia, No. 41 (405), July 8, 1918.

### THE FOOD PROBLEM

DEAR COMRADES: I am taking advantage of the fact that Comrade Kayurov, an old acquaintance of mine well known to the Petrograd workers, is leaving for Petrograd, to send you a few lines.

Comrade Kayurov has been in the Simbirsk Province and has himself observed the attitude of the kulaks to the poor peasants and to our government. He has realised perfectly what no Marxist and no class conscious worker can doubt—that the kulaks hate the Soviet government, the government of the workers, and will infallibly overthrow it if the workers do not immediately bend every effort to forestall the attack of the kulaks on the Soviets and to smash the kulaks before they manage to unite.

The class conscious workers can do this right now; they can rally the poor peasants, defeat the kulaks and smash them, provided the vanguard of the workers realise their duty, bend every effort and organise a mass campaign into the rural districts.

Nobody but the workers of Petrograd can do this, for there are no other workers in Russia as class conscious as the Petrograd workers. It is foolish and criminal to sit in Petrograd, starve, hang around idle factories and cherish the absurd dream of restoring Petrograd's industry or defending Petrograd. That will spell the ruin of our revolution. The Petrograd workers must abandon such nonsense, send packing those fools who advocate it, and set out in tens of thousands for the Urals, the Volga, and the South, where there is an abundance of grain, where they can feed themselves and their families, where they must help the poor peasants to organise, and where the Petrograd worker is indispensable as an organiser, guide and leader.

Kayurov will give you his personal observations, and, I am certain, will convince all waverers. The revolution is in danger. Only a mass campaign of the Petrograd workers can save it. Arms and money we shall not stint.

With Communist greetings,

Lenin

Letter to Petrograd workers, July 12, 1918.

Proletarskaya Revolutsia, No. 3, 1920.

### **RELATIONS WITH GERMANY**

COMRADES, our Soviet Republic cannot complain of any lack of political crises or rapid political changes. However simple and elementary all the imperialist forces may be, forces which cannot, of course, feel at ease side by side with the socialist Soviet Republic, yet at a moment like the present, when the war is continuing on its former scale, the obviously leading forces, the combination of two imperialist groups, continue to give rise to a political crisis or something very much like it. I must now inform you about one such event, something very similar to a political crisis, if not actually a crisis.

Yesterday, July 14, at 11 P.M., Doctor Ritzler, the German Chargé d'Affaires, called upon the People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs and informed him of the contents of a telegram he had just received from Berlin in which the German government instructed him to request the consent of the Russian government to admit a battalion of German uniformed troops for the protection of the German Embassy, and to the earliest despatch of these troops to Moscow.

The telegram further stated that all idea of occupation was remote from the intentions of the German government.

Acting in concurrence with the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, the People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs replied that the people of Russia desired peace, that the Russian government was prepared to furnish the German Embassy, Consulate and commissions with a fully adequate and reliable guard from its own troops, but under no circumstances could it consent to allow foreign troops into Moscow, and earnestly trusted that the German government, similarly actuated by a desire for peace, would not insist on its request.

And indeed this application to the Russian government runs directly counter to the declaration made by the Imperial Chancellor in the Reichstag to the effect that the deplorable assassination of Count Mirbach would not lead to any deterioration in the relations between the two countries. It also runs counter to the desire of the leading commercial and industrial circles of Germany, as we are well aware, to establish and develop close economic relations to the advantage of both countries, as well as to the negotiations, which are making successful headway. This is borne out by the numerous statements made to our representative in Berlin as to the political situation and the attitude towards Russia.

There is still every reason to hope that this unexpected incident will be satisfactorily settled; but whenever our foreign relations become strained, we deem it necessary to make the fact public and to be frank about it.

I therefore consider it my duty to make the following statement on behalf of the government:

"When the Government of the Soviet Republic signed the Brest-Litovsk Peace, it was fully aware of the arduous task the workers and peasants of Russia would have to shoulder, in view of the state of international affairs. The will of the overwhelming majority of the delegates at the Fourth Congress of Soviets was perfectly clear: the labouring classes demanded peace, since they needed a respite for work, for the organisation of a socialist economy, and for the mustering and consolidation of their forces which had been sapped by an agonising war.

"In fulfilment of the will of the Congress of Soviets, the Government faithfully observed the conditions of the Brest-Litovsk Peace, and considerable progress has recently been made in our negotiations with the German Government regarding the precise determination and the method of settlement of the sums we are called upon to pay, which we have decided to effect at the earliest possible date.

"But while strictly observing the conditions of the Brest-Litovsk Peace and obeying the wish of the workers and peasants for peace, the Government of the Soviet Republic has never lost sight of the fact that there is a limit beyond which even the most peaceable of labouring masses would be compelled to rise, as they will rise to a man, in armed defence of their country.

"The senseless and criminal folly of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries has brought us to the brink of war. Our relations with the German Government, despite our best intentions, were bound to become strained. Recognising the legitimate wish of the German Government

to strengthen the guard on its Embassy, we have gone and are prepared to go a long way to meet this wish.

"But when we were informed of the request of the German Government, which has not yet been presented in the form of an absolute demand, that we allow a battalion of armed and uniformed German troops into Moscow, we replied, and we repeat that reply now before the highest organ of the workers' and peasants' Soviet state, the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, that under no conditions or circumstances can we accede to such a request; for, objectively speaking, it would mean the beginning of the occupation of Russia by foreign troops.

"To such a step we would be obliged to react as we are reacting to the revolt of the Czechoslovaks and the military acts of the British in the North, namely, by more intensive mobilisation, by calling upon all adult workers and peasants to a man to offer armed resistance and, should a temporary retreat be necessary, to destroy by fire all stores and warehouses without exception, and especially foodstuffs, so as to prevent their falling into the hands of the enemy. War in that event would be for us a fatal but absolute and unconditional necessity; but the workers and peasants of Russia would, shoulder to shoulder with the Soviet Government, fight this revolutionary war to their last breath.

"The home policy of the Soviet Government, which strictly conforms to the decisions of the Fifth Congress of Soviets, like its foreign policy, remains unchanged. The criminal folly of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries who have proved to be accomplices of the White Guards, the landlords and the capitalists, will appear even more criminal in the eyes of the people now that the clouds of war are gathering and the danger of war is increasing; and we will wholeheartedly endorse and exact ruthless vengeance on the traitors who have been irrevocably condemned by the will of the Fifth Congress of Soviets. If, despite all our efforts, war becomes a reality, we cannot have even a shade of confidence in the gang of Left Socialist-Revolutionary traitors who have shown themselves capable of thwarting the will of the Soviets, of committing military treason and the like. By mercilessly crushing all counter-revolutionaries, both the insane Left Socialist-Revolutionary adventurers and the deliberate, class-conscious landlords, capitalists, and kulaks, we shall derive new strength for the war.

"We appeal to the workers and peasants of all Russia: 'Comrades, exercise triple vigilance, caution and restraint. Let each stand firmly

at his post. Let each be prepared to die if need be in defence of the Soviet state, in defence of the interests of the toilers, the exploited, the poor, in defence of socialism."

Statement to Central Executive Committee of Soviets, July 15, 1918.

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# THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

THE strained conditions of the Soviet Republic are due to the internal and foreign situations. We have never attempted to conceal from the workers and peasants how great was the burden of the shameful peace. Burdensome as it was, the Fourth Congress of Soviets deemed it essential to sign this peace in order to afford the Russian workers and peasants a breathing space and an opportunity to consolidate their position. The responsibility for the assassination of Mirbach lies at the door of the Left Socialist-Revolutionary Party, which has brought Russia to the brink of doom.

There are signs that the German government is prepared to come to terms and may renounce the despatch of a battalion of German soldiers to Moscow. The Soviet government has categorically rejected this request of the German government, even if it leads to war.

The folly of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries has severely affected the position of the Soviet state, but, on the other hand, one result has been that the best of them, the labouring section are repudiating the Left Socialist-Revolutionary Party.

The aggravation of relations with Germany has been accompanied by an aggravation of relations with the other coalition. The Czechoslovak revolt is the work of their hands. This is borne out in the case of the officers, who are being supported by French money and are assisting the Czechoslovaks.

Lenin went on to say that the war is engendering revolution, and the longer it lasts, the more hopeless it makes the position of the belligerent countries and the nearer it brings them to revolution. Germany and Austria have again been swept by a strike wave. All the imperialist sharks are hurling themselves on Russia and are bent on tearing her to pieces. For they know that every month socialist Russia exists paves the way to their own doom. To us has fallen the

supreme honour and supreme difficulty of being the first socialist detachment in the fight against world imperialism. Our task is to hold on.

Lenin then went on to speak of the famine, which the White Guards are banking on in order to overthrow the Soviet government. The monarchists, the kulaks, the money bags are playing up the famine for all they are worth. They are not confining themselves to propaganda, but are corrupting the poor peasants, egging them on to profiteer and to fight the workers. Two classes are in conflict: the proletariat and the kulaks, the capitalists. One of these classes must win, and the other will be smashed. Our socialist revolution calls for an alliance of the class-conscious workers with the majority of the peasantry, the poor and middle peasants, to combat the kulaks and to establish the strictest order in the interests of the workers. We have one means of salvation from famine at our disposal, and that is a fighting alliance between the workers and the poor peasants to take away the grain from the kulaks and profiteers. Look the danger in the face! The enemy is everywhere, but we have new allies too-the proletariat of the countries where war is still being waged. We also have allies at home—the vast mass of the poor peasants, who will march in serried ranks with the urban proletariat.

Newspaper account of speech at Moscow meeting, July 19, 1918.

Pravda, No. 151, July 21, 1918.

## THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

THESE past few days have been marked by an extreme aggravation of the affairs of the Soviet Republic, caused both by the international situation of the country and by the counter-revolutionary plots and the food crisis which is closely connected with them.

Allow me to dwell on the international situation. The Russian revolutionary movement is only one of the detachments of the international socialist army, on the action of which the success and triumphant consummation of our revolution will depend. This is a fact which none of us lose sight of. We likewise bear in mind that the primacy of the Russian proletariat in the world working class movement is not due to the economic development of the country. On the contrary, it is due to the backwardness of Russia, to the inability of what is called our native bourgeoisie to cope with the regiments of the proletariat, its inability to seize political power and establish its own class dictatorship. Aware of the isolation of its revolution, the Russian proletariat clearly realises that an essential condition and prime requisite for its victory is the united action of the workers of the whole world, or of several capitalistically advanced countries. But the Russian proletariat knows perfectly well that it has both avowed and unavowed friends in every country. For example, there is not a country in which prisons do not contain internationalists who sympathise with Soviet Russia; there is not a country in which revolutionary thought has not found expression in either the open or secret press. And therefore, knowing our true friends, we refuse to come to any understanding with the Mensheviks, who supported Kerensky and his offensive.

Very significant in this latter connection is a letter (small in size but distinctly internationalist in substance) from the internationalist Rosa Luxemburg which appeared in the English paper, the Workers' Dreadnought \* on the subject of the July offensive. Rosa Luxemburg holds that the internationalism of the great Russian Revolution was undermined by Kerensky's offensive and by the sanction and approval given to it by the First All-Russian Congress of Soviets. This offensive of revolutionary Russia retarded the development of the revolution in the West, and it was only the dictatorship of the proletariat, the assumption by it of the entire power, that led to the frustration of the secret treaties and the exposure of their predatory, imperialist character, and, hence, to the acceleration of revolutionary developments in Europe.

An equally powerful influence in awakening and developing proletarian energies in the West was exercised by our appeal to all the nations for the conclusion of a democratic peace without annexations or indemnities. † All these revolutionary acts helped to open the eyes of the workers of the whole world, and no efforts on the part of the bourgeois and social-traitor groups will succeed in obscuring their awakened class consciousness. The reception given to Kerensky by the British workers shows this quite clearly. The high regard for the Russian Revolution has found expression in the first action of the German workers on a grand scale since the outbreak of the war, when they reacted to the Brest-Litovsk negotiations by a gigantic strike in Berlin and in other industrial centres. This action of the proletariat in a country drugged by the fumes of nationalism and intoxicated with the poison of chauvinism is a fact of cardinal importance and marks a turn of sentiment among the German proletariat.

We cannot say what course the revolutionary movement in Germany will take. One thing is certain, and that is the existence of a tremendous revolutionary force there that must by iron necessity make its presence felt. There is no reason to blame the German workers for not making a revolution. One might with equal justice have blamed the Russian workers for not manufacturing a revolution during the ten years 1907 to 1917. But that, we know, would be wrong. Revolutions are not made to order, they cannot be timed for any particular moment; they mature in a process of historical development and break out at a moment determined by a whole complex of internal and external causes. That moment is close at hand and is bound to come, inevitably

<sup>\*</sup>Organ of the British Workers' Socialist Federation, founded in London, March, 1914.—Ed.

<sup>†</sup> See V. I. Lenin, "Report on Peace," Collected Works, Vol. XXII, Russian ed.-Ed.

and unavoidably. It was easier for us to start the revolution, but it is extremely difficult to continue it and consummate it. It is frightfully difficult to make a revolution in such a highly developed country as Germany, with its splendidly organised bourgeoisie, but all the easier will it be to complete the socialist revolution triumphantly once it flares up and spreads in the advanced capitalist countries of Europe.

There is no reason to blame us for concluding the Brest-Litovsk Treaty—humiliating, distressful and coercive though it is—or for regarding it as a complete renunciation of our ideals and an act of allegiance to German imperialism. It is characteristic that these accusations come from the bourgeois circles and social-compromising elements, like the Mensheviks, who, in the Ukraine, Finland, and the Caucasus, are today greeting the German Junkers with open arms.

Similar accusations are showered upon our heads by the emptyheaded Left Socialist-Revolutionaries. We are perfectly aware of the distressful nature of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty. We are also aware that under this coercive treaty we shall have to pay Germany about six billion rubles, according to the calculations of our economic delegation now in Berlin. The situation is undoubtedly a hard one, but a way out can and must be found by the joint efforts of the proletariat and the poor peasants. And it is not the insensate attempt of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries to embroil us in war by assassinating Mirbach that is the way to escape from the Brest-Litovsk Treaty. On the contrary, this act of folly played into the hands of the German war parties, whose position, naturally, is bound to be weakened by the growth of defeatism not only among the German workers but also among the bourgeoisie. For now, after the Brest-Litovsk Peace, it is clear and obvious to everybody that Germany is waging a predatory war for definitely imperialist aims.

The food situation of Soviet Russia is very drastic, surrounded as she is on all sides by imperialist robbers, and with ever alert counter-revolutionaries within the country supporting them. The attention of the working class must be directed to the task of combating famine, the bourgeoisie's most effective means of fighting the proletarian dictatorship. But one thing we must take as our fundamental precept: in combating famine, we will categorically renounce the bourgeois methods, the method of starving the masses in the interests of the money bags and parasites, and will resort to purely socialistic methods.

And the latter consist in introducing a grain monopoly and establishing fixed prices in the interests of the workers.

The bourgeoisie and its followers, the social-compromisers, are advocating freedom of trade and the abolition of the fixed prices. But freedom of trade has already proved fruitful in a number of cities. No sooner was it introduced than the price of grain increased several times over, and as a result the article itself disappeared from the market; it was hidden away by the kulaks in the hope of a further rise of prices.

The most desperate enemy of the proletariat and Soviet Russia is famine. But in its efforts to vanquish it, the proletariat comes into collision with the rural bourgeoisie, which, far from having any interest in putting an end to the famine, derives advantage from it for its own group and class. The proletariat must bear this in mind and, in alliance with the hungry poor peasants, must start a desperate and uncompromising struggle against the rural kulaks. With the same purpose in view, the organisation of food detachments already begun should be continued, and at the head of them should be placed honest Communists who enjoy the confidence of party and trade union organisations. Only then will the food problem be solved and the cause of the revolution saved.

Report at Moscow Provincial Conference of Factory Committees, July 23, 1918.

Pravda, No. 153, July 24, 1918.

#### THE SOVIET CONSTITUTION

SPEAKING on the subject, "What the Soviet Constitution Will Mean to the Working People," Lenin remarked that the Soviet Constitution, which, like the Soviets, was created in a period of revolutionary struggle, was the first constitution to proclaim the governmental power of the working people and to disfranchise the exploiters—the enemies of the building of a new life. This is the chief thing that distinguishes it from the constitutions of other countries, and it is a pledge of ultimate victory over capital.

Referring to some of the chief principles of the Declaration of the Rights of the Toiling and Exploited People, Lenin said that the working people of all countries would now see that the Soviet Constitution—the fundamental law of the Russian Soviet Socialist Federative Republic—reflects the ideals of the proletariat of the whole world. The hour of reckoning with the bourgeoisie of all countries is drawing nigh! Indignation is growing in Western Europe! The task before us is to conquer all obstacles in our path, however difficult they may be, and to maintain the power of the Soviets until the working class of all countries revolts and raises aloft the great banner of a world socialist republic!

Newspaper account of speech at Moscow meeting, July 26, 1918.

Pravda, No. 157, July 28, 1918.

### THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

COMRADES, we have had more than one occasion to point out in the party press, in Soviet institutions and in our agitation among the masses that the period remaining until the new harvest will be the most difficult, arduous, and crucial phase in the socialist revolution that has begun in Russia. Now, I think, we may say that this crucial situation has reached its climax. That is because it has become perfectly clear who are the supporters of the imperialist world, of the imperialist countries, and who the supporters of the Soviet Socialist Republic. It should first of all be said that from the military standpoint the position of the Soviet Republic has only now become fully defined. Many at first regarded the Czechoslovak revolt as just an episode in the chain of counter-revolutionary revolts. We did not sufficiently appreciate the news in the papers regarding the participation of British and French capital, of the British and French imperialists, in this revolt. We must now recall the development of events in Murmansk, among the Siberian troops, in the Kuban; we must recall how the British and French, in alliance with the Czechoslovaks, with the direct assistance of the British bourgeoisie, endeavoured to overthrow the Soviets.

All these facts now show that the Czechoslovak movement was only one link in the chain which has long been forged by the systematic policy of the British and French imperialists for the strangulation of Soviet Russia, with the object of again dragging Russia into the ring of imperialist wars. This crisis must now be resolved by the broad masses of Soviet Russia, for it confronts us today not only as a struggle for the preservation of the Soviet Socialist Republic from the attack of the Czechoslovaks, as one particular counter-revolutionary attempt; and not even from counter-revolutionary attempts in general, but as a struggle against the onslaught of the whole imperialist world.

I should like first of all to remind you of the fact that the direct and

immediate participation of the British and French imperialists in the Czechoslovak revolt has long been established; I would remind you of an article which was printed by the *Prukopnik Svobody* [Banner of Freedom], the central organ of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, on June 27 and reprinted in our press:

"On March 7, the Department of the National Council received the first instalment from the French Consul in the amount of three million rubles.

"This money was handed to a certain Mr. Síp, an official of the Department of the National Council.

"On March 9, this same Šíp received another two million and on March 25 another million, and on March 26, Mr. Bohumil-Ĉermák, Vice-President of the National Council, received one million; on April 3 Mr. Šíp received another million.

"In all, from March 7 to April 4, the French consul paid the Department of the National Council 8,000,000 rubles.

"No dates are indicated for the following payments: Mr. Šíp 1,000,000, Mr. Bohumil-Ĉermák 1,000,000, and Mr. Šíp another million.

"In addition, a sum of 188,000 rubles was paid to an unknown person. Total, 3,188,000 rubles. Together with the above-mentioned 8,000,000 we get a total of 11,188,000 rubles paid by the French government to the Department of the National Council.

"From the British Consul the Department received £80,000. From March 7 to the date of action, the leaders of the Czech National Council received from the French and British governments about 15,000,000 rubles, and for this sum the Czechoslovak army was sold to the French and British imperialists."

The majority of you, of course, read this statement in the newspapers at the time it was published. Of course, we never doubted that the imperialists and financial magnates of Great Britain and France would do their very utmost to overthrow the Soviet government and to place every possible difficulty in its way. But at that time the full chain of events had not yet developed which shows that what we are faced with here is a systematic, methodical and evidently long-planned counter-revolutionary military and financial campaign against the Soviet Republic, which all the representatives of British and French imperialism had been preparing for months. Now, however, when we review the events as a whole, when we compare the Czechoslovak counter-revolutionary movement with the Murmansk landing—where

we know that the British have disembarked over ten thousand soldiers, and under the pretext of defending Murmansk have actually begun to advance, have occupied Kem and Soroki, have moved eastward of Soroki, and have begun to shoot our Soviet officials—when we read in the newspapers that many thousands of railwaymen and other workers of the Far North are fleeing from these saviours and liberators, or to call them by their true name, these new imperialist bandits who are rending Russia from another end—when we compare all these facts, the general connection of events becomes clear. And quite recently we received new confirmation of the character of the Anglo-French offensive against Russia.

For geographical considerations alone it is clear that the form of this imperialist offensive against Russia cannot be the same as it was in the case of Germany. They have no common frontiers with Russia, as Germany has; they have not the same number of troops. In their wars of conquest, the British have already been compelled for many years and decades, owing to the primarily colonial and naval character of Britain's armed forces, to employ different methods of attack, to attempt chiefly to cut off the sources of supply from the country attacked, and to prefer the method of strangulation, under a pretext of helping, to open, direct, blunt and outspoken military force. From information we have received recently, it is clear beyond a doubt that British and French imperialism has been rendering aid to [General] Alexeyev, who has long been notorious among the Russian soldiers and workers and who recently seized Tikhoretskaya.\* There the revolt has taken a more definite form, again apparently because British and French imperialism has a hand in it.

Lastly, yesterday we received news that in Baku the British and French imperialists have succeeded in making a very effective move. They have managed to secure a majority of about thirty votes in the Baku Soviet, as against our party, against the Bolsheviks, and those Left Socialist-Revolutionaries—unfortunately, very few in number—who refused to fall in with the despicable exploits and treachery of the Moscow Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, and who have remained loyal to the Soviet government in the struggle against imperialism and war. As against this nucleus in the Baku Soviet which is loyal to the Soviet government and which hitherto constituted the majority, the British and French imperialists have now secured a majority of

<sup>\*</sup> Important railroad centre in the North Caucasus.-Ed.

thirty votes, owing to the fact that the greater part of the Dashnaktsutyun Party, the Armenian quasi-Socialists, have sided with them against us.

(Reads the telegram.)

"On July 26, on the orders of People's Commissar Karganov, the Adji-Kabul detachment retired from Adji-Kabul to the Alyat position after the withdrawal of the Shemakha detachment. The enemy began to advance from Shemakha Maraza along the valley of the Pirsagat; near the village of Kubala, the first skirmish with the enemy's vanguard occurred. Under the circumstances, to hold the Andjika station we would have had to extend all our available forces to the north and south of the Pirsagat Naviga Valley. This would have left us without reserves if the cavalry were to retreat, would have made it impossible to strike at the enemy, and would even have endangered the position of Adji-Kabul. In view of such a dislocation, and in order to conserve the strength of the troops, orders were given to the detachment to retreat from Adji-Kabul and withdraw to the position in good order. Important structures on the road to Adji-Kabul Station—the kerosene and oil reservoirs—have been blown up.

"In Daghestan, the enemy is displaying activity in connection with the general offensive. On July 24, it advanced in large force in four directions. After twenty-four hours' fighting we occupied the enemy's trenches; the foe dispersed in the woods and nightfall prevented further pursuit. On July 24, news of successful fighting was received from Shura, where the environs of the town are the theatre of hostilities; the enemy is putting up a stubborn and organised resistance, and is commanded by former Daghestan officers. Daghestan peasants are taking an active part in the fighting around Shura. Encouraged by our reverses on the main front, the Right parties have raised their heads and are actively agitating for the recognition of the British. This agitation is strongly backed by the army officers and is being carried among the forces at the front. Anglophile agitation has disorganised the army. The British orientation has recently been making great headway among the worn-out and distraught workers. The masses are being influenced by the unscrupulous and provocative activities of the Right parties. The Caspian flotilla has adopted several contradictory resolutions on the subject of the British. Deceived by British hirelings and voluntary agents, until quite recently it blindly believed in the

sincerity of British support. Latest reports state that the British are nearing Persia and have occupied Resht (Giljan), where for four days they have been engaged against Kuchuk-Khan, and the German and Turkish bands who have joined forces with him, headed by Mussavatists who had fled from Baku. When the fighting began in Resht the British applied to us for assistance, but our representatives in Persia refused. The British have got the upper hand in Resht. But they have practically no forces in Persia. We have ascertained that they have only fifty men in Enzeli. They need gasolene, in exchange for which they are offering us automobiles. Without gasolene they cannot advance.

"On July 25, a second meeting of the Soviet was held to discuss the political and military position at the instance of the Right parties. Resolved, on the question of the British: Comrade Shaumyan, Commissar Extraordinary for the Caucasus, citing the resolution of the Fifth Congress of Soviets and Stalin's telegram on behalf of the Central Council of People's Commissars on the impermissibility of inviting the British, demanded the removal from the agenda of the question of inviting the British. Comrade Shaumyan's demand was defeated by a small majority, whereupon, as representative of the central government, he entered a vigorous protest. The meeting heard the report of the delegates who had visited the front. By 250 votes of the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, Right Dashnaks and Mensheviks against 236 votes of the Bolsheviks, Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and Left Dashnaks, a resolution was adopted to invite the British and to form a government comprising members of all parties represented on the Soviet and recognizing the power of the Council of People's Commissars. The resolution was sharply condemned by the Left sector. Shaumyan declared that he regarded it as a shameful betrayal and stark ingratitude towards the workers and peasants of Russia, and that, as representative of the central government, he renounced all responsibility for the decision.

"A statement was made on behalf of the group of Bolsheviks, Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and Left Dashnaks to the effect that they would not join the coalition government and that the Council of People's Commissars would resign. Comrade Shaumyan declared in the name of the three Left groups that a government which had in fact broken with the Russian Soviet government by inviting the British imperialists would receive no support from Soviet Russia. By its

treacherous policy of inviting the British, the local Soviet had lost Russia and the parties supporting the Soviet government.

"The Right parties are utterly dismayed by the decision of the Council of People's Commissars to resign and the resulting situation. There has been an abrupt change of sentiment in the districts and at the front; the sailors now realise that they have been duped by traitors who want to break with Russia and destroy the Soviet government, and the bulk of them have revised their attitude towards the British. Yesterday, an urgent meeting of the Executive Committee was held in connection with the resignation of the Council of People's Commissars. It was decided that all the People's Commissars should remain at their posts and continue their former functions pending decision of the question of the government. The Executive Committee has decided to take urgent measures at the meeting of the Soviet on July 31 to ascertain how far the town is able to combat the threatening counter-revolution. The counter-revolutionaries are carrying on their activities under the wing of the French parties.

"Press Bureau of the Baku Council of People's Commissars."

Not unlike the groups here who call themselves Socialists but have never broken off connections with the bourgeoisie, there, too, these people come out in favour of inviting the British troops to defend Baku. We already know only too well, the meaning of such invitations to imperialist troops to defend the Soviet Republic. We know the meaning of this invitation extended by the bourgeoisie, a section of the Socialist-Revolutionaries, and by the Mensheviks.

We may now say that the only party which has never invited imperialists and has never entered into robber alliances with them, but has only retreated before these cutthroats when they pressed too hard, is the Bolshevik, the Communist Party. We know that the position of our Communist comrades in the Caucasus was a very difficult one, because they were surrounded by the treachery of the Mensheviks, who had entered into direct alliance with the German imperialists, on the pretence, of course, of defending the independence of Georgia.

You are all aware that this independence of Georgia was a sheer fraud. Actually it amounted to the occupation and complete seizure of Georgia by the German imperialists, an alliance of German bayonets with the Menshevik government against the Bolshevik workers and peasants. And, therefore, our Baku comrades were a thousand times

right when they refused to close their eyes to the danger of the situation and said: We would never be opposed to peace with an imperialist power on the basis of ceding to it part of our territory, provided this would not hurt us, did not bind our troops in an alliance with the bayonets of the aggressors and did not prevent us from carrying on our socialist reconstructive work.

But since, as the question now stands, by inviting the British, supposedly for the defence of Baku, we would be inviting a power which has already swallowed up the whole of Persia and which has long been stealthily mustering its military forces for the seizure of the Southern Caucasus—that is, surrendering ourselves to British and French imperialism—we cannot doubt or hesitate for a moment and must say that, however difficult the situation of our Baku comrades may be, by refusing to conclude such a peace they have taken the only step worthy of true Socialists. This resolute rejection of any agreement whatever with the British and French imperialists was the only right course for our Baku comrades to take, for you cannot invite them without converting your independent socialist government, even though on a severed territory, into a slave of imperialist war. We therefore do not entertain the slightest doubt as to the significance of the Baku events in the general scheme of events.

Yesterday, news was received that counter-revolutionary revolts have broken out in a number of towns in Central Asia with the obvious complicity of the British entrenched in India, who, having brought Afghanistan completely under their sway, have long ago created a base both for the extension of their colonial possessions, the strangulation of nations, and for attacks on Soviet Russia. And now when these separate links have become quite clear to us, the present military and general strategical position of our republic has been fully revealed. Murmansk in the north, the Czechoslovak front in the east, Turkestan, Baku and Astrakhan in the southeast—we see that practically all the links in the chain forged by British and French imperialism have been joined.

We now clearly see that the landlords, the capitalists, and the kulaks, all of whom, of course, for reasons quite natural to them entertain a burning hatred of the Soviet government, are now acting here, too, in forms differing very little from those of the landlords, capitalists, and kulaks in the Ukraine and in other regions severed from Russia. Like the lackeys of British and French imperialism they are, they have

done their utmost to undermine the Soviet government, to undermine it at all costs. They could not do it with forces inside Russia alone, so they decided to act not by words, not by appeals in the spirit of the Milyukov gentry,\* but by resorting to more effective methods of struggle, military hostilities. That is where our attention should be chiefly directed; that is where we should concentrate all our agitation and propaganda; and we should shift the centre of all our Soviet work accordingly.

That is the fundamental fact, namely, that it is the imperialist forces of the other coalition that are now at work, not the German, but the Anglo-French, which has seized part of our territory and is using it as a base. Hitherto our geographical position has prevented them from attacking Russia by the direct route; now British and French imperialism, which for four years has been drenching the whole world with blood in a bid for world supremacy, has by an indirect route approached within easy reach of Russia, with the object of strangling the Soviet Republic and plunging Russia into imperialist war.

You are all perfectly aware that from the very beginning of the October Revolution our chief aim has been to put a stop to the imperialist war; but we never cherished the illusion that the forces of the proletariat and the revolutionary masses of any one country, however heroic and however organised and disciplined they might be, could overthrow international imperialism. That can be done only by the joint effort of the proletariat of all countries.

But what we have done is that in one country all connections with the capitalists of the whole world have been severed. Our government is not tied by a single thread to any imperialists of any kind, and never will be, whatever future course our revolution may take. The revolutionary movement against imperialism during the eight months of our rule has made tremendous strides, and in one of the chief centres of imperialism, Germany, matters in January, 1918, reached the stage of an armed clash and the bloody suppression of that movement. We have done our revolutionary job as no revolutionary government in any country has ever done on an international, world-wide scale; but we never deceived ourselves into thinking that this could be done by the efforts of one country alone. We knew that our efforts were inevitably leading to a world-wide revolution, and that the war begun by the imperialist governments could not be stopped by the efforts of those

In the stenogram appears the name of Martov instead of Milyukov.—Ed.

governments themselves. It can be stopped only by the efforts of the entire proletariat; and when we came to power, our task as the socialist, proletarian. Communist Party, at a time when in the other countries the capitalist bourgeois still remained in the saddle—our immediate task, I repeat, was to retain that power, that torch of socialism, so that it might scatter as many sparks as possible to add to the growing flames of the social revolution.

Everywhere this was a task of extreme difficulty; and what enabled us to accomplish it was the fact that the proletariat rallied to the defence of the gains of the Socialist Republic. This task has led to a particularly arduous and critical situation, for the socialist revolution, in the direct sense of the term, has not yet begun in any country, although it has been so imminent in countries like Italy and Austria. But as it has not yet begun, we are faced with a new success on the part of British and French, and hence the world, imperialism. Whereas in the West, German imperialism continues to stand as a military, annexatory, imperialist power, in the northeast and south of Russia, British and French imperialism has been able to entrench itself and is making it clear and obvious to us that this force is prepared once more to plunge Russia into imperialist war, is prepared to crush Russia, the independent socialist state that is continuing its socialist work and propaganda on a scale hitherto unparalleled anywhere in the world. Against this, British and French imperialism has won a big victory, and, surrounding us on all sides, it is doing its utmost to crush Soviet Russia. We are fully aware that this victory of British and French imperialism is inseparably connected with the class struggle.

We have always said—and revolutions bear it out—that when the foundations of the economic power of the exploiters are at stake, their property, which places the labour of tens of millions of workers and peasants at their disposal and enables them to coin wealth in their landlord interest—when, I repeat, the private property of the capitalists and landlords is at stake, they forget all their talk about love of country and independence. We know that the Cadets, the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks have beaten the record in the way of alliances with the imperialist powers, of concluding predatory treaties and betraying the country to British and French imperialism. The Ukraine and Tiflis are illustrations. The alliance of the Mensheviks and Right Socialist-Revolutionaries with the Czechoslovak is sufficient proof of this. And the action of the Left Socialist-

Revolutionaries, when they tried to embroil the Russian Republic in war in the interests of the Yaroslavl White Guards, shows quite clearly that when its class profits are at stake, the bourgeoisie will sell its country and strike a bargain with any foreigner against its own people. This truth has once again been borne out by the history of the Russian Revolution, after over a hundred years of history of revolution had shown that such is the law of class interests, of the class policy of the bourgeoisie, at all times and in all countries. It is therefore by no means surprising that the present aggravation of the position of the Soviet Republic internationally is connected with the aggravation of the class struggle within the country.

We have often said, in this respect, in respect to the aggravation of the food crisis, that the period until the new harvest will be the most difficult. Russia is being flaved with the scourge of famine, which has attained unparalleled proportions, because it is precisely the plan of the imperialist robbers to cut off her food-producing regions. Their calculations are well founded and are based on the fact that in the grain-producing regions they have a social and class foundation: they have areas where the kulaks predominate—the rich peasants, who have battened on the war and who live by the labour of others, the labour of the poor. You know that these elements have piled up tens and hundreds of thousands of rubles and that they have huge stocks of grain. You know that it is these people who have battened on the misfortunes of the nation and who had greater opportunity to rob and to increase their profits the more the population of the capital suffered; it is these kulak elements who have constituted the chief and most formidable buttress of the counter-revolutionary movement in Russia. Here the class struggle has reached its deepest springs. There is not a village left where the class struggle is not raging between the poor and those middle peasants who have no grain surpluses, who have consumed them long ago, and who do not go in for profiteering-between this vast labouring majority, on the one hand, and a miserable handful of kulaks on the other. This class struggle has penetrated every village.

When we were determining our political plans and publishing our decrees—the vast majority of those present here are, of course, familiar with them—when, I repeat, we drafted and passed the decrees on the organisation of the poor peasants, it was clear to us that we were coming up against the most decisive and fundamental issue of the

whole revolution, the most decisive and fundamental issue between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie—the issue of power; whether the power would remain in the hands of the proletariat; whether the latter would gain the support of all the poor peasants, with whom it has no differences; whether it would succeed in enlisting the peasants with whom it has no conflict, and unite this whole mass, which is dispersed, disunited and scattered through the villages-in which respect it is inferior to the urban workers; whether it could unite them against the other camp, the camp of the landlords, the imperialists, and kulaks. It is said that revolution teaches. The class struggle does indeed teach in practice that any false note in the position of any party immediately lands that party where it deserves to be. We have clearly seen this in the case of the policy of the party of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, who, because of their spinelessness and brainlessness, started to vacillate just at a time when the food problem was most sharply put, and who disappeared from the stage as a party and became a pawn in the hands of the Yaroslavl White Guards.

The wave of revolts that is sweeping over Russia is easy to understand, in the light of this sharpening of the class struggle in connection with the food crisis, at the very time when it has been established that the new harvest is an abundant one, but cannot yet be gathered, and when the hunger-tormented inhabitants of Petrograd and Moscow are being driven to starvation by the kulaks and the bourgeoisie, who are making the most desperate efforts and saying-"Now, or never!" There is the revolt in Yaroslavl. And we can see the influence of the British and French; we see the calculations of the counter-revolutionary landlords and bourgeoisie. Wherever the question of grain arose, they obstructed the grain monopoly, without which there can be no socialism. That is just where the bourgeois are bound to unite: here the bourgeoisie has a stronger backing than the village muzhik. The decisive fight between the forces of socialism and bourgeois society is bound to come in any case, whatever happens, if not today then tomorrow, on one issue or another. Only pseudo-Socialists, like our Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, for example, can waver. When we find Socialists wavering over this question, over this fundamental question, it means that they are only pseudo-Socialists, and are not worth a brass farthing. The effect of the revolution has virtually been to turn such Socialists into mere pawns in the hands of the French generals, pawns of whose function we have had an example in the case of the

former Central Committee of the former Left Socialist-Revolutionary Party.

The result of this combination of the efforts of the British and French imperialists and of the counter-revolutionary Russian bourgeoisie has been that the civil war in our country is now coming from a quarter which not all of us anticipated and from which not all of us clearly realised it might come, and it has merged with the war from without into one indivisible whole. The kulak revolts, the Czechoslovak mutiny and the Murmansk movement are all part of one and the same war that is moving down on Russia. We escaped from war in one quarter by incurring tremendous losses and signing an incredibly onerous peace; we knew that we were concluding a coercive peace, but we said that we would be able to continue our propaganda and our constructive work, and in that way would disintegrate the imperialist world. We have succeeded in doing that. Germany is now negotiating with us as to how many billions to extort from Russia on the basis of the Brest-Litovsk Peace, but she has recognized all the acts of nationalisation we proclaimed under the decree of June 28. She has not raised the question of private ownership of land in the republic; this point must be stressed as a counterblast to the unprecedented lies spread by Spiridonova and similar leaders of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, lies that have brought grist to the mill of the landlords and are now being repeated by the most ignorant and backward Black Hundred elements. These lies must be nailed.

The fact of the matter is that, burdensome as the peace may be, we have won freedom to carry on socialist construction at home, and have taken steps in this direction which are now becoming known in Western Europe and constitute elements of propaganda that are incomparably more effective than any before.

And so, having escaped from war in one quarter, with one coalition, we are at once subjected to an imperialist assault from another quarter. Imperialism is a worldwide phenomenon; it is a struggle for the division of the whole world, of the whole earth, for the domination of one group of robbers or another. Another group of robbers, the Anglo-French, are hurling themselves at our throats and threatening to drag us into war again. Their war is merging with the civil war into one continuous whole, and that is the chief source of our difficulties at the present juncture, when the question of war, of military events, has again come to the forefront as the cardinal and fundamental question

of the revolution. Therein lies the whole difficulty; for the people are weary of war, exhausted by it as never before. This state of extreme war fatigue and exhaustion of the Russian people suggests a parallel with a man who has been thrashed within an inch of his life, and who cannot be expected to show any energy or working capacity. And in the same way this nearly four-years' war, overwhelming a country which had been despoiled, tormented, and defied by tsardom, by the autocracy, the bourgeoisie and Kerensky, has for many reasons naturally aroused in the Russian people a feeling of abhorrence, and is one of the chief sources of the tremendous difficulties we are now experiencing.

On the other hand, such a turn of events definitely made for war. We have again been plunged into war, we are in a state of war; and it is not only a civil war, a war against the kulaks, the landlords and the capitalists who have united against us-now we are faced with British and French imperialism. It is still not in a positon to launch its hordes against Russia—it is prevented by geographical conditions; but it is devoting all it can, all its millions, all its diplomatic connections and forces, to aid our enemies. We are in a state of war, and we can emerge triumphant from this war. But here we come up against a formidable enemy, one of the most difficult to cope with—the war-weariness, the hatred and abhorrence of war; and this must be overcome, for otherwise we shall not be able to tackle this problem—the problem of war which we did not will. Our country has again been plunged into war, and the issue of the revolution will now entirely depend on who is the victor in this war, the principal protagonists in which are the Czechoslovaks, but the real directors, the real motive and actuating power of which are the British and French imperialists. The whole question of the existence of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, the whole question of the Russian Revolution has been reduced to a question of war. That is a source of tremendous difficulties. considering the state in which the people have emerged from the imperialist war. Our task is now perfectly clear. All deceit would be of the utmost harm; we would consider it a crime to conceal this bitter truth from the workers and peasants. On the contrary, let the truth be brought home to them all as clearly and forcibly as possible.

Yes, there have been cases when our troops displayed criminal weakness, as, for example, during the capture of Simbirsk by the Czechoslovaks, when our forces retreated. We know that the troops

are tired of war and loathe it; but it is also natural and inevitable that until imperialism is defeated on an international scale, it should attempt to drag Russia into the imperialist war, endeavour to convert her into a shambles. Whether we like it or not, the question stands as follows: We are in the midst of a war, and on the issue of that war the fate of the revolution will depend. That should be the first and last word of our propaganda work, of all our political, revolutionary, and reconstructive activities. We have done much in a very short time; but the job has yet to be completed. All our activities must be entirely and completely subordinated to that question, on which the fate and issue of the revolution, the fate of the Russian and international revolution now depends. Of course, world imperialism cannot emerge from the present war without a number of revolutions; this war cannot end otherwise than by the ultimate victory of socialism. But our task now is to maintain, protect, and uphold this force of socialism, this torch of socialism, this source of socialism which is so actively influencing the whole world. And as matters now stand, this task is a military task.

This is not the first time we have been in such a position; and many of us have said that however severe the price we had to pay for peace, however grave the sacrifices it demanded of us, however much the enemy was straining to rob us of more and more territory, Russia so far, in spite of everything, was still enjoying peace and was in a position to consolidate her socialist gains. We have even gone farther in this direction than many of us expected. For example, our workers' control has advanced a long way from its early forms, and today we are about to witness the conversion of the state administration into a socialist system. We have made great strides in our practical affairs. We now have complete administration of industry by the workers. But circumstances have prevented us from continuing that work in peace; they have once again plunged us into war, and we must strain every nerve and summon everyone to arms. If any vacillation were to be encountered on this score among the Communists, it would be a disgrace.

The vacillation among the peasants does not surprise us. The peasant masses have not been through the same school of life as the proletarians, who have been accustomed for decades to look upon the capitalist as their class enemy, and who have learnt to unite their forces to combat him. We know that the peasants have not been through

such a university. At one time they sided with the proletariat, but today we are witnessing a period of vacillation, when the peasant masses are splitting up. We know any number of instances of kulaks selling grain to the peasants below the fixed prices in order to create the impression that they, the kulaks, are defending the peasants' interests. None of this surprises us. But the Communist worker will not waver, the working class masses will stand firm; and if a kulak spirit prevails among the peasants, that is easy to explain. Where the Bolsheviks no longer are, and the Czechoslovaks rule, we observe the following picture: at first the Czechoslovaks are hailed practically as deliverers; but after a few weeks of this bourgeois rule, a tremendous movement against the Czechoslovaks and in favour of the Soviet government arises, because the peasants begin to realise that all the talk about freedom of trade and a Constituent Assembly means only one thing—the rule of the landlords and capitalists.

Our job is to rally the ranks of the proletariat still closer and to create such an organisation that within the next few weeks everything will be devoted to the solution of the war problem. We are now at war with British and French imperialism and with everything bourgeois and capitalist in Russia, with all who are endeavouring to frustrate the socialist revolution and embroil us in war. All the gains of the workers and peasants are at stake. We must place our confidence in the broad sympathy and support of the proletariat, and then the danger will be completely removed, and new ranks of the proletariat will come forward to stand up for their class and save the socialist revolution. As matters now stand, the struggle is being fought over two major issues, and all other party differences have been obliterated in the fires of revolution. The Left Socialist-Revolutionary who keeps reminding us that he is a Left conceals himself behind a cloud of revolutionary phrases, while actually revolting against the Soviet government, is nothing but a hireling of the Yaroslavl White Guards. That is what he is in the eyes of history and the revolutionary struggle! Today only two classes stand facing each other in the arena of battle: the class struggle is between the proletariat, which is protecting the interests of the working people, and those who are protecting the interests of the landlords and capitalists. All the talk about a Constituent Assembly, about an independent state and so on, which is being used to dupe the ignorant masses, has been exposed by the experience of the Czechoslovak movement and the movement of

the Caucasian Mensheviks. Behind all this talk stand the same forces the landlords and capitalists; and just as the German occupation brings in its train the rule of the landlords and capitalists, so does the Czechoslovak mutiny. That is what the war is about!

The proletariat must close its ranks more firmly than ever and set an example of organisation and discipline in this struggle. Russia must remain a country, so far the only country, which has severed all ties with the imperialists. True, we are bleeding from grave wounds. We have retreated in the face of the imperialist brute, playing for time, striking a blow at it here and there; but, as the socialist Soviet Republic, we have remained independent. Performing our social task, we have taken up the cudgels against the imperialism of the whole world; and the import of this struggle is becoming clearer and clearer to the workers of the world, and their present indignation is bringing them nearer and nearer to the future revolution. It is over this that the struggle is being waged, because our republic is the only country in the world not to march hand-in-hand with imperialism and not to allow millions of people to be slaughtered in order to decide whether the French or the Germans might rule the world. Our republic is the only country to have broken away by force, by revolutionary means, from the world imperialist war, and to have raised the banner of socialist revolution. But efforts are again being made to drag it back into the imperialist war, to force it into the trenches again. Let the Czechoslovaks fight the Germans, let the Russian bourgeoisie make its choice, let Milyukov decide, perhaps even in concurrence with Spiridonova and Kamkov, which imperialists to side with. But we declare that in order not to allow the solution of this problem, we must be prepared to lay down our lives; for the salvation of the whole socialist revolution is at stake.

I know that a change of spirit is to be observed among the peasants of the Saratov, Samara, and Simbirsk provinces, where fatigue was most marked and fitness for military action was lowest of all. After experiencing the ravages of the Cossacks and Czechoslovaks, and having a real taste of what the Constituent Assembly and the cries, "Down with the Brest-Litovsk Peace!" mean, they have realised that all this only leads to the return of the landlord, to the capitalist mounting the throne—and they are now becoming the most ardent champions of Soviet government. I do not entertain a shadow of doubt that the proletarian masses of Petrograd and Moscow, who are marching

at the head of the revolution, will understand the situation, will understand the gravity of the times, will act with greater determination than ever, and that the proletariat will smash both the Anglo-French and the Czechoslovak offensive in the interest of the socialist revolution.

Speech at a joint meeting of the Central Executive Committee, the Moscow Soviet, factory committees and the trade unions, July 29, 1918.

Published in Stenographic Report of the Fifth All-Russian Central Executive Committee, 1919.

### THE TASKS OF ADMINISTRATION

COMRADES, your job is one of administration, which plays a dominant part in the affairs of the Council of People's Commissars. Quite naturally, many difficulties lie ahead of us. We observe that in the majority of provincial executive committees the masses are at last beginning to tackle the work of administration themselves. Difficulties, of course, are unavoidable. One of our greatest shortcomings has been that we still draw all too little on the ranks of the workers for our practical staffs. But it was never our intention to adapt the old apparatus to the new system of administration, and we do not regret that with the abolition of the old apparatus everything has to be built anew, and with so much difficulty. The worker and peasant masses possess greater constructive talent than might have been expected. It is to the credit of the Revolution that it swept away the old administrative apparatus. But at the same time we have to admit that the chief shortcoming of the masses is their timidity and reluctance to take affairs into their own hands.

Some of our provincial Soviets have been inefficient; but now the work is steadily improving, so that we are in receipt of information from many parts of the country stating that no misunderstandings or conflicts arise. Although only eight months have elapsed, the Russian Revolution has demonstrated that the new class which has taken the administration of affairs into its own hands is capable of coping with the task. In spite of the shortage of forces, the administrative apparatus is running more smoothly every day. Our constructive work is in a stage where definite results are not yet visible, a fact which the enemy keeps harping on; but, nevertheless, quite a lot has already been done. The transfer of the land and industry to the working people, the exchange of goods and the organisation of food supply are being carried into effect in face of uncommon difficulties. The working

masses must be promoted to independent work in administering and building up the socialist state. Only practice will teach the masses that the old exploiting class is finished and done with.

Our chief and most urgent task is administration, organisation, and control. This is a thankless and inconspicuous job; but it is in the performance of this job that the business and administrative talents of the workers and peasants will develop ever more effectively.

The worker and peasant masses, upon whom the government has called to administer the country, and who have remained remote from such affairs for so long, could not help wanting to learn by their own experience how to build the state. The effect of the slogan, "All power to the Soviets!" was that the people in the localities wanted to gain experience in building the state by learning from their own mistakes. Such a transitional period was unavoidable, and it has proved beneficial. In this tendency towards separatism, there was much that was healthy and wholesome, in the sense that it displayed a creative spirit. The Soviet Constitution has defined the relations between the volont [township] authority and the uyezd [county] authority, between the uyezd authority and the provincial authority, and between the latter and the centre.

Now that the Constitution has been endorsed and is being put into effect, an easier period in our state affairs is beginning. But, unfortunately, it is hard for us just now to devote ourselves to economic, business and agricultural policy. We have to divert all our attention to more elementary things—the food question. The condition of the working class in the hungry provinces is really drastic. Every effort must be made to overcome the food difficulties and the other difficulties linked with them until the new harvest is brought in.

Besides this, there are tasks of a military character. You know that the Czechoslovak movement, bribed and instigated by the British and French imperialists, has encompassed Russia in a semicircle. You also know that the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie and the kulak peasants are joining this movement. We have received news from the localities to the effect that the reverses recently suffered by Soviet Russia have convinced the workers and the revolutionary peasants by their own experience that not only is control needed in the sphere of state development, but it is also needed in the military sphere.

I am convinced that things will go better in the future. I am convinced that the provincial executive committees, by organising, with

the help of the peasants, control over the commanding staff, will create a strong socialist army. The lessons of the revolution have at last taught the classes of the workers and exploited peasants the necessity of taking to arms. The peasants and workers, besides having won the land, control, etc., have learnt to understand the necessity of governing the army. By carrying their efforts into the sphere of military affairs, they will make the army which they have created fully deserving of the title of a socialist army, an army which will successfully fight the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie and the imperialists until such time as the international revolutionary proletariat comes to our aid.

Speech at Congress of Chairmen of Provincial Soviet Executive Committees, July 30, 1918.

Izvestia, No. 161, July 31, 1918.

# NEWSPAPER REPORTS OF FOUR MOSCOW SPEECHES

1

RUSSIAN and Polish revolutionaries are today united by one wish—to consolidate the gain of the first socialist revolution, which is bound to be followed by a series of revolutions in other countries. For four years now the world has been drenched in blood. Two predatory imperialist groups are fighting for mastery of the globe. But it is becoming clearer every day that it is not the imperialists that will end the war, but a victorious workers' revolution.

Soviet Russia made offers of peace to the whole world, in return for which, in February, German troops were launched against her. Today the British and French are making every effort to drag us into the war. But we know that the war is nearing an end. We have a reliable ally. A last effort must be made. Either the power of the kulaks, capitalists and a tsar, as was the case in the unsuccessful revolutions in the west, or the power of the proletariat. To you has fallen the great honour of defending our sacred aims by force of arms, shoulder to shoulder with yesterday's enemies at the front—Germans, Austrians, Hungarians—and with the great battlecry on your lips: "Victory or death!" fighting the brigands, the Black Hundreds of the whole world, and giving practical effect to the international brotherhood of peoples.

Speech at meeting of the Warsaw Revolutionary Regiment, August 2, 1918.

Pravda, No. 163, August 4, 1918.

II

COMRADES, today the destiny of socialist Russia is being discussed at meetings in various parts of Moscow.

The enemies of Soviet Russia surround us in a close ring of steel.

The banner of the Russian social revolution, waving high aloft, gives no peace to the international imperialists, and they have started a war against the Soviet government, the government of the workers and peasants.

You will remember, comrades, that at the beginning of the revolution the French and British never tired of repeating that they were the "allies" of free Russia. Today these "allies" have shown their true colours. By lies and deceit, they occupied Murmansk, then seized Kem and began to shoot members of the Soviets.

They have found active accomplices in the Czechoslovaks, who have been induced to march against us by the bribe of British and French gold. Like them, our own "saviours of the fatherland," Dutov, Alexeyev and the rest, are also lining their pockets with British and French gold.

The Soviet government said: "We do not want to fight the Germans, nor the English, nor the French. We do not want to slay workers and peasants like ourselves—they are not our enemies. We have a different enemy—the international bourgeoisie." And our slogans are being caught up in all countries. In Germany, a defeatist movement has already begun; in Italy and Austria, mass strikes are taking place; in America, Socialists are being arrested wholesale. Sensing their doom, the capitalists and landlords are making a last effort to crush the revolutionary movement. The Russian capitalists are stretching out a hand to the British and French capitalists and landlords.

Two fronts now face each other: the workers and peasants on one side, and the capitalists on the other. The last, decisive fight is at hand.

In 1871, the bourgeoisie overthrew the power of the Paris workers. But in those days there were very few class-conscious workers, very few revolutionary fighters. This time the bourgeoisie will not triumph. The workers are keeping a firm hold on the mills and factories; the peasantry will not surrender the land to the landlords. And in defence of these achievements we also proclaim war on all marauders and profiteers. Besides machine-guns and cannon, they are threatening us with the weapon of famine.

Proclaiming war on the rich, we say: "Peace to the cottages!" We shall take all stocks from the profiteers and will never abandon the labouring poor to the mercy of fate!

Speech at a Moscow meeting, August 2, 1918. Investia, No. 164 (428), August 3, 1918.

#### III

THE Russian Revolution has indicated the road to socialism for the whole world and has shown the bourgeoisie that the end of its triumph is approaching. Our revolution is taking place amidst the frightful hardships of a world war.

Revolutions are not made to order; but the signs that the whole world is ready for great events are unmistakable.

We are surrounded by enemies who have concluded a holy alliance for the overthrow of the Soviet power; but they will never secure the power themselves.

The rejoicing of the White Guard bands is premature—their success will be short-lived; unrest is already spreading in their midst.

The Red Army, reinforced by the revolutionary proletariat, will help us raise on high the banner of the world social revolution.

Victory or death!

We will vanquish the international kulak and uphold the cause of socialism!

Speech at meeting of Red Army men, Moscow, August 2, 1918.

Izvestia, No. 164 (428), August 3, 1918.

#### IV

THE war is already in its fifth year, and by now it is clear to all who it was that wanted it. The rich have grown richer, while the poor are literally gasping under the yoke of capitalism. This war has cost the poor people many a bloody sacrifice, and all they have received in return is hunger, unemployment and the noose drawn tighter than ever around their necks.

The war was started by the British and German marauders, who found themselves too cramped living together, and so each of them decided to drown the other in the blood of the working class of the world. Each of these marauders assures us that he is inspired by the interests of the people, but we know that he is working in the interests of his own pocket.

England is plundering the colonies seized from Germany, part of Palestine and Mesopotamia, while Germany, in her turn, is plundering Poland, Courland, Lithuania, and the Ukraine. The millionaires of these countries have grown ten times richer; but they have miscalculated all the same.

Locked in mortal combat, these marauders are on the verge of an abyss. They can no longer stop the war, which is inevitably driving the people to revolution.

The Russian Revolution has cast sparks into every country of the world; it has pushed the unbridled imperialists still nearer the edge of the precipice.

Our position is no easy one, but we must overcome every difficulty and hold fast the banner of socialist revolution we have raised aloft.

The hopes of workers of all countries turn towards us. We can hear their cry: "Hold on a little longer! You are surrounded by enemies, but we will come to your aid, and by our joint effort we will finally cast the imperialist marauders into the abyss."

We hear this cry, and we swear that we will hold on, we will fight with all our strength at our post and will not lay down our arms in face of the onslaught of world counter-revolution!

Speech at a Moscow meeting, August 9, 1918.

Izvestia, No. 171 (435), August 11, 1918.

## A LETTER TO ELETZ WORKERS

I HAVE received a clipping from an Eletz newspaper containing a report of a special meeting of the Eletz branch of the party of Left Socialist-Revolutionaries held on July 27. I see from this report that Mochenov reported on the Saratov conference of the Socialist-Revolutionaries, where eight of the branches approved the tactics of their Central Committee, whose actions were justified by Mr. Kolegayev, while thirteen branches demanded the reorganisation of the party and a change of tactics.

I note that at the Eletz meeting Comrade Rudakov insisted that the party (the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries) be reorganised and its name changed, that it be purged and that under no circumstances should it be allowed to disintegrate and perish. A certain Kryukov then alleged that he had spoken to representatives of the central government in Moscow and that Comrades Avanesov, Sverdlov, and Bonch-Bruyevich had declared that the Soviet government considered the existence of the party of Left Socialist-Revolutionaries desirable; he also alleged that in a conversation with him I had said the same thing and had stated that the Communists had also gone a long way from all their former theories, from the books, that they had no program at all at the present moment, while in their platforms a great deal was indirectly borrowed from the "Narodnik" theory, and so on, and so forth.

I consider it my duty to state that this is pure fiction and that I have never spoken to this Kryukov. I earnestly request our comrades, the workers and peasants of the Eletz uyezd, to be extremely cautious of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, who all too frequently say what is not true.

A few words, by the way, as to my view of them. Types like Kolegayev and the others are obviously just pawns in the hands of the White Guards, the monarchists, the Savinkovs, who in Yaroslavl \* showed who was profiting by the revolt of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries. Their brainlessness and spinelessness brought Kolegayev and his friends to this pass—and they deserved it! History will know them as "the servitors of Savinkov." But the facts show that among the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries there are people (and in Saratov they are in the majority) who were ashamed of this brainlessness and spinelessness, of this role of servitors of monarchism and the interests of the landlords. If these people desire even to change the name of their party (I have heard that they want to call themselves "Village-Commune Communists" or "Narodnik Communists," etc.), that is only to be welcomed.

The pure ideological basis of this Naradoism, an alliance with which the Bolshevik Communists have never rejected, is, firstly, disagreement with Marxism, and, secondly, complete agreement with the theory of "equal land tenure" (and with the law on equal land tenure).

We favour such an alliance, such an agreement with the middle peasants, for we worker Communists have no grounds for quarrelling with the middle peasants and are prepared to make them a number of concessions. We have proved this; and we proved it not only in word, but in deed, because we have been carrying out the law on the socialisation of the land with absolute loyalty, despite the fact that not all of us are in agreement with it. Generally, we have been and are in favour of ruthless war on the kulaks, but we are also in favour of an agreement with the middle peasantry and of amalgamation with the poor peasantry. An agreement with the middle peasantry must not be construed as necessarily implying agreement with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries. Nothing of the kind.

We passed the law on socialisation at a time when we had no agreement with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries; and this law, in fact, is an expression of our agreement with the middle peasant, with the peasant masses, and not with the Left Socialist-Revolutionary intellectuals.

Comrades, workers and peasants, do not be too eager for an agreement with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, for we have seen and have suffered from their unreliability. Spread communism among the poor peasants; the majority will be on our side. Try to make conces-

<sup>•</sup> The Yaroslavl revolt, organised by White Guard elements, took place July 6-21, 1918.—Ed.

sions to the middle peasants; treat them as tactfully and as fairly as possible; because we can and should make concessions to the middle peasants. Be ruthless in your attitude towards the small handful of exploiters, including the kulaks and the grain profiteers, who are growing rich on the misfortunes of the people and the starvation of the working class masses—towards the handful of kulaks who are sucking the blood of the toilers.

Moscow, August 6, 1918.

Sovetskaya Gazeta, No. 73, August 11, 1918.

### NEW FORCES FOR THE PARTY

WE are experiencing a great shortage of forces, yet forces are to be had among the masses, forces that can be utilised. Greater confidence must be shown in the worker masses and we must learn to draw forces from their midst. This can be done by enlisting into the party sympathisers among the youth and the trade unions. Never mind if their membership dues are in arrears—there is no danger in that. If we assign six thousand for the front and take on twelve thousand others in their place, there will be no great danger. We must utilise our moral influence to enlarge our party.

All too few new people get up and speak at our meetings, yet new people would be desirable; there would be a live note in their speeches. The working-class youth must be skilfully organised in some way or other. Guidance of the worker masses is needed. The exigencies of the situation demand that large numbers of party members be sent to the front, before the Japanese and the Americans can consolidate their position in Siberia. These old forces must be replaced by new forces, by young people.

Party members must carry on energetic agitation among the workers. Comrades who are capable of doing anything at all must not be kept in office jobs.

We must broaden our sphere of influence among the working-class masses. The nuclei are displaying too little initiative; their activities could be very useful in influencing the non-party masses in the localities. Attention should be paid to the clubs, and party workers should be recruited from the masses. If the payment of dues is an obstacle, they should be abolished.

We must not accept people who try to join from careerist motives; these should be driven out of the party.

Speech at meeting of Moscow committee of the Communist Party, August 16, 1918.

Pravda, No. 19, January 22, 1928.

## A LETTER TO AMERICAN WORKERS

COMRADES, a Russian Bolshevik who participated in the 1905 Revolution and afterwards lived in your country for many years has offered to deliver my letter to you. I accepted his proposal all the more gladly for the reason that precisely at the present moment the American revolutionary proletarians are destined to play a particularly important role as uncompromising foes of American imperialism, which is the youngest, strongest and latest to participate in the worldwide slaughter of nations for the division of capitalist profits. The American billionaires, those modern slave-owners, have just opened a particularly tragic page in the bloodstained history of bloodstained imperialism by giving their approval—direct or indirect, open or hypocritically concealed, it makes no difference—to an armed expedition of the British and Japanese brutes for the purpose of strangling the first socialist republic.

The history of modern civilised America opened with one of those great, really emancipatory, really revolutionary wars of which there have been so few compared with the numerous predatory wars which, like the present imperialist war, were caused by quarrels among kings, landlords, and capitalists over the division of usurped lands and stolen profits. This was the war waged by the American people against the English robbers who oppressed America and held her in a state of colonial slavery, just as these "civilised" bloodsuckers are still oppressing and holding in a state of colonial slavery hundreds of millions of people in India, Egypt, and in all other parts of the world.

Since that time about one hundred and fifty years have elapsed. Bourgeois civilisation has borne all its luxuriant fruits. By her high level of development of the productive forces of organised human labour, by the employment of machinery and all the marvels of modern technology, America holds first place among the free and cultured

nations. At the same time America has become one of the outstanding countries as regards the depth of the gulf which divides a handful of arrogant billionaires, wallowing in filth and luxury, from the millions of toilers who are always on the borderline of poverty. The American people, who have set the world an example of how to conduct revolutionary war against feudal subjection, now find themselves in a state of modern, capitalist, wage slavery to a handful of billionaires; they find themselves playing the role of hired assassins, who for the benefit of wealthy scoundrels strangled the Philippines in 1898 on the pretext of "liberating" her, and who are trying to strangle the Russian socialist republic in 1918 on the pretext of "protecting" it from the Germans.

But the four years of imperialist slaughter of nations have not been in vain. Obvious and irrefutable facts have utterly exposed the deception perpetrated on the people by the scoundrels of both the English and the German groups of robbers. The results of the four years of war have revealed the general law of capitalism as applied to a robber war for the division of spoils: the richest and strongest gained and grabbed most; the weakest were robbed, tortured, crushed, and strangled without mercy.

The English imperialist robbers owned most "colonial slaves." The English capitalists have not lost a foot of "their" territory (that is, territory acquired by centuries of robbery), but they have grabbed all the German colonies in Africa, have grabbed Mesopotamia and Palestine, have stifled Greece and have begun to plunder Russia.

The German imperialist robbers were strongest of all as regards the organisation and discipline of "their" armies, but they were weaker in colonies. They have lost all their colonies, but they have grabbed half of Europe and throttled most of the small countries and weak nations. What a great war of "liberation" on both sides! How well they have "defended the fatherland," those robbers of both groups, the Anglo-French and the German capitalists, together with their lackeys, the social-chauvinists, *i.e.*, Socialists who deserted to the side of "their" bourgeoisie!

The American billionaires were perhaps the richest of all, and geographically speaking, their position was most secure. They have profited more than all the rest. They have reduced all countries, even the richest, to the position of their vassals. They have grabbed hundreds of billions of dollars. And on every dollar we see traces of filth: the filthy secret treaties between England and her "allies," between

Germany and her vassals, treaties concerning the division of the spoils, pacts of "mutual assistance" in oppressing the workers and persecuting the socialist internationalists. On every dollar there is a clot of filth from the "lucrative" war contracts which in every country have made the rich richer and the poor poorer. Every dollar is stained with blood—of that ocean of blood that was shed by the ten million killed and twenty million maimed in the great, noble, emancipatory and holy war to decide whether the English or the German robbers shall get the lion's share of the loot, whether the English or the German thugs shall be the first to strangle the weak nations all over the world.

While the German robbers have broken the record for military atrocities, the English robbers have broken the record not only for the number of colonies they have grabbed, but also for the refinement of their vile hypocrisy. The British, French, and American bourgeois press is just now spreading their lies and calumnies about Russia in millions and millions of copies, hypocritically justifying their predatory expedition against her on the plea that they desire to "protect" her from the Germans!

Not many words are needed to disprove this despicable and hideous lie; it is sufficient to point to one well-known fact. When the Russian workers overthrew their imperialist government in October 1917, the Soviet government, which is a government of the revolutionary workers and peasants, openly proposed the conclusion of a just peace, a peace without annexations or indemnities, a peace that would fully observe equality of rights for all nations. It proposed such a peace to all the belligerent countries.

It was the British, French, and American bourgeoisie who rejected our offer. It was they who even refused to talk to us about universal peace! It was they who betrayed the interests of all nations. It was they who prolonged the imperialist slaughter!

It was they who, calculating on drawing Russia into the imperialist war again, refused to participate in the peace negotiations and thus gave a free hand to the no less predatory German capitalists in foisting the annexationist and coercive Brest-Litovsk Peace on Russia!

It is difficult to imagine a more disgusting piece of hypocrisy than that with which the British, French, and American bourgeoisie now throw the "blame" on us for the Brest-Litovsk Peace. The very capitalists of those countries in whose power it was to transform the Brest-Litovsk negotiations into general negotiations for world peace are now

our "accusers"! The British-French imperialist vultures who enriched themselves by plundering colonies and slaughtering nations, and who have prolonged the war for nearly a year now since Brest-Litovsk, "blame" us, the Bolsheviks, who proposed a just peace to all countries, who tore up, published and publicly exposed the criminal secret treaties concluded between the ex-tsar and the British and French capitalists.

The workers of the whole world, irrespective of the country they live in, greet us, sympathise with us and applaud us for having broken the iron ring of imperialist ties, of sordid imperialist treaties, of imperialist chains; for having broken through to freedom, even at the cost of tremendous sacrifice; for having, as a socialist republic, even though torn and plundered by the imperialists, got out of the imperialist war and for having hoisted in the sight of the whole world the banner of peace, the banner of socialism.

It is not surprising that the gang of international imperialists hate us and "blame" us, and that all the lackeys of imperialism, including our Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, also "blame" us. From the hatred these watchdogs of imperialism display for the Bolsheviks, as well as the sympathy of the class conscious workers of all countries, we draw new assurance of the justice of our cause.

He is no Socialist who fails to understand that no sacrifice, even the sacrifice of territory, of severe defeat at the hands of the capitalists of other countries, and the paying of tribute to the capitalists, is too great to secure victory over the bourgeoisie, to transfer power to the workers, to start the international proletarian revolution. He is no Socialist who has not shown by deeds that he is willing that "his" country should make the greatest sacrifices really to further the cause of the socialist revolution.

For the sake of "their" cause, for the sake of winning world dominion, the imperialists of England and Germany did not hesitate utterly to ruin and strangle a number of countries, from Belgium and Serbia to Palestine and Mesopotamia. Should the Socialists, then, for the sake of "their" cause, for the sake of emancipating the toilers of the whole world from the yoke of capital, for the sake of winning universal and lasting peace, wait until a way is found that entails no sacrifice? Should they be afraid to start the battle until easy victory is "guaranteed"? Should they place the safety and integrity of "their" bourgeois-created "fatherland" higher than the interests of the world

socialist revolution? The cads in the international Socialist movement, the lackeys of bourgeois ethics who think they should, are thrice deserving of contempt.

The British, French, and American imperialist sharks "accuse" us of "compromising" with German imperialism.

Hypocrites! Scoundrels! They slander the workers' government while trembling with fear at the sympathy which the workers of "their" own countries display towards us! But their hypocrisy will be exposed. They pretend not to understand the difference between the compromise of "Socialists" with the bourgeoisie (their own and foreign) against the workers, against the toilers, and compromise for the purpose of protecting the workers who have defeated their bourgeoisie, compromise with the bourgeoisie of one national hue against the bourgeoisie of another national hue so that the proletariat might take advantage of the antagonisms among the various bourgeois groups.

As a matter of fact, every European understands this difference perfectly well, and as I shall show in a moment, the American people have "experienced" this very graphically in their own history. There are compromises and compromises; there are fagots et fagots, as the French say.

When, in February 1918, the German imperialist robbers led their troops against unarmed, demobilised Russia, which had trusted in the international solidarity of the proletariat before the international revolution had fully matured, I did not hesitate in the least to enter into a "compromise" with French monarchists. Captain Sadoul of the French army, who sympathised with the Bolsheviks in words, but in deeds faithfully served French imperialism, brought a French officer, de Lubersac, to see me. I am a monarchist, my sole object is to secure the defeat of Germany, he said. Cela va sans dire (that goes without saying), I replied. This did not in the least prevent me from "compromising" with de Lubersac concerning the services which French officers, expert sappers, desired to render us in blowing up railway tracks to hinder the advance of the Germans. This was an example of a "compromise" that every class conscious worker will approve, a compromise in the interests of socialism. The French monarchist and I shook hands, knowing that each of us would willingly have hanged his "partner." For a time, however, our interests coincided. Against the advancing marauders we utilised the equally rapacious opposite interests of the other imperialists in the interest of the Russian and international socialist revolution. Thus we served the interests of the working class of Russia and of other countries; we strengthened the proletariat and weakened the bourgeoisie of the whole world; we resorted to manœuvres, strategems and retreats which are legitimate and essential in *every* war, in anticipation of the moment when the rapidly ripening proletarian revolution in a number of advanced countries *matured*.

No matter how much the British, French and American imperialist tigers may roar with rage, no matter how much they may slander us, no matter how many millions they may spend on bribing the Right Socialist-Revolutionary, Menshevik and other social-patriotic newspapers, I would not hesitate for a moment to enter into a similar "compromise" with the German imperialist robbers if an attack on Russia by Anglo-French troops demanded it. I know perfectly well that the class conscious proletariat of Russia, Germany, France, England, America, in short, of the whole civilised world, will approve of my tactics. Such tactics help the cause of the socialist revolution, hasten its advent, weaken the international bourgeoisie and strengthen the position of the working class which is vanquishing it.

The American people employed such tactics long ago, and with advantage to the revolution. When they were waging their great war of liberation against the English oppressors they also had to contend against the French and Spanish oppressors who owned part of the present territory of the United States of America. In their arduous struggle for emancipation, the American people also concluded "compromises" with some of the oppressors against others for the purpose of weakening the oppressors and strengthening those who were fighting in a revolutionary manner against oppression, in the interests of the oppressed masses. The American people took advantage of the antagonisms between the French, the Spaniards and the English; they sometimes even fought in conjunction with the troops of the French and Spanish oppressors against the English oppressors; they first vanquished the English and then liberated themselves (partly by purchase) from the French and the Spaniards.

"Historical action is not the pavement of the Nevsky Prospect," \* said the great Russian revolutionary, Chernyshevsky. Those who

The broad and smoothly paved avenue in Leningrad, renamed the Avenue of October 25, to commemorate the establishment of the Soviet Republic on November 7 (October 25), 1917.—Ed.

would "agree" to a proletarian revolution only "on the condition" that it were brought about easily and smoothly, that there were immediate united action on the part of the proletarians of different countries, that guarantees be given in advance against defeat, that the road of revolution be broad, free and straight, that at no time during the march to victory would it be necessary to make severe sacrifices, "to hold out in a besieged fortress," or to climb up narrow, impassable, winding and dangerous mountain passes—are not revolutionaries, have not freed themselves from the pedantry of the bourgeois intellectuals, and will be found constantly sliding into the camp of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie, as was the case with our Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, Mensheviks and even (although more rarely) Left Socialist-Revolutionaries.

Following the bourgeoisie, these gentlemen like to blame us for the "chaos" of revolution, for the "destruction" of industry, for unemployment and the bread shortage. How hypocritical are these accusations, coming from those who welcomed and supported the imperialist war or "compromised" with Kerensky, who continued this war! It is the imperialist war that is responsible for all these misfortunes. Revolution called forth by war cannot but experience incredible hardship and suffering inherited from the long, ruinous, reactionary slaughter of nations. To charge us with having "destroyed" industry, or with employing "terror," implies either hypocrisy or stupid pedantry, and a lack of comprehension of the fundamental conditions of that fierce and extremely intense class struggle which is called revolution.

Actually speaking, such "accusers," if they "recognise" the class struggle at all, confine themselves merely to a verbal recognition of it and constantly slip into the petty-bourgeois utopia of class "compromise" and class "collaboration." For in the epoch of revolution the class struggle has always, and in all countries inevitably and unavoidably, assumed the form of civil war; and civil war is inconceivable without destruction in its severest form, without terror, and without the restriction of formal democracy in the interests of the war. Only mealy-mouthed parsons—whether Christian or "secular," like the parliamentary parlour Socialists—can fail to see, understand and appreciate the necessity for this. Only a lifeless "man in a muffler" is capable of shunning revolution for this reason, instead of rushing into battle full of ardour and determination at a moment when history

demands the solution of the greatest problems of mankind by means of struggle and war.

The American people have a revolutionary tradition that has been adopted by the best representatives of the American proletariat, who have repeatedly expressed their complete sympathy with us, the Bolsheviks. This tradition is the war of liberation against the English in the eighteenth century, and the Civil War in the nineteenth century. In 1870, America, if we take only the "destruction" of certain branches of industry and of the national economy, was in some respects, behind 1860. But what a pedant, what a crass idiot a man would be who, on these grounds, denied the great, world-historical, progressive and revolutionary significance of the American Civil War of 1861-65!

The representatives of the bourgeoisie know that the abolition of Negro slavery, the overthrow of the power of the slave-owners was worth the whole country going through long years of civil war, the abyss of ruin, destruction and terror that are the concomitants of every war. But today, when the immeasurably far greater task of over-throwing wage slavery, capitalist slavery, of overthrowing the power of the bourgeoisie, is involved, the representatives and champions of the bourgeoisie, and also the social-reformists, cowed by the bourgeoisie and living in fear of revolution, cannot and will not understand the necessity and legitimacy of civil war.

The American workers will not follow the bourgeoisie. They will be on our side, for civil war against the bourgeoisie. The history of the world and the American labour movement strengthens my conviction. I also recall to mind the words of Eugene Debs, one of the most beloved leaders of the American proletariat, in an article in *The Appeal to Reason*,\* at the end of 1915, I think, entitled "In Whose War I Will Fight" (I quoted this article in the beginning of 1916 at a public meeting of workers in Berne, Switzerland). He said that he, Debs, would rather be shot than vote for loans for the present criminal and reactionary imperialist war; that he, Debs, knows of only one holy and, from the standpoint of the proletariat, legitimate war: war against the capitalists, war for the liberation of mankind from wage slavery!

I am not surprised that Wilson, the head of the American billionaires and servant of the capitalist sharks, threw Debs into prison. Let the

<sup>\*</sup>A widely circulated Socialist weekly published in Girard, Kansas, during the early 1900's. See Voices of Revolt: Eugene V. Debs (International Publishers, N. Y.), p. 63.—Ed.

bourgeoisie commit their atrocities against the true internationalists, the true representatives of the revolutionary proletariat! The greater their fury and brutality, the nearer will be the day of the victorious proletarian revolution.

We are blamed for the destruction caused by our revolution. But who are the accusers? The hangers-on of the bourgeoisie, that very bourgeoisie which during the four years of imperialist war has destroyed nearly the whole of European culture, has reduced Europe to barbarism, to savagery, to famine. This bourgeoisie now demands that we refrain from making revolution on the basis of this destruction, amidst this wreckage of culture, this wreckage and ruin created by the war, and with people reduced to savagery by the war. Oh, how humane and righteous is this bourgeoisie!

Its servants accuse us of resorting to terror. The English bourgeoisie have forgotten their 1649, and the French their 1793.\* Terror was just and legitimate when employed by the bourgeoisie in their own interests against the feudal rulers. Terror became monstrous and criminal when the workers and poor peasants dared to employ it against the bourgeoisie! Terror was just and legitimate when it was employed for the purpose of substituting one exploiting minority for another exploiting minority. Terror became monstrous and criminal when employed for the purpose of overthrowing all exploiting minorities, in the interests of the overwhelming majority, in the interests of the proletariat and the semi-proletariat, the working class and the poor peasantry!

The international imperialist bourgeoisie slaughtered ten million people and maimed twenty million in "their" war, a war to determine whether the English or German robbers should rule the whole world.

If our war, the war of the oppressed and exploited against the oppressors and exploiters entails half a million or a million casualties in all countries, the bourgeoisie will say that the first mentioned casualties were legitimate, the latter criminal.

The proletariat will say something entirely different.

At the present time, amidst the horrors of imperialist war, the proletariat is receiving a thorough and striking lesson in the great truth which all revolutions teach, the truth bequeathed to the workers

<sup>\*</sup> The execution of Charles I and the suppression of the opposition during Cromwell's regime in England in 1649, and the terror during the Great French Revolution.—
Ed.

by their greatest teachers, the founders of modern socialism. This truth is that no revolution can be successful unless the resistance of the exploiters is crushed. When we workers and toiling peasants captured political power it became our duty to suppress the resistance of the exploiters. We are proud of the fact that we have done and are doing this. We regret that we are not doing it with sufficient firmness and determination.

We know that the furious resistance of the bourgeoisie to the socialist revolution is inevitable in all countries, and that it will grow as the revolution grows. The proletariat will break this resistance; it will become fully mature for victory and for power in the process of fighting the resisting bourgeoisie.

Let the venal bourgeois press din into the ears of the world every mistake our revolution makes. Our mistakes do not frighten us. The fact that the revolution has begun has not turned people into saints. The working classes who have been oppressed, down-trodden, and forcibly held in the vise of poverty, ignorance, and savagery for centuries cannot make a revolution without making mistakes. And, as I have already had occasion to point out,\* the corpse of bourgeois society cannot be nailed in a coffin and buried in the ground. Vanquished capitalism is dying and decaying in our midst, contaminating the atmosphere, poisoning our lives, and clinging with a thousand threads and ties of the old, decayed, and dead to the new, fresh, young and living.

For every hundred mistakes which we commit and which the bourgeoisie and their lackeys (including our Mensheviks and Right Socialist-Revolutionaries) are dinning into the ears of the world, ten thousand great and heroic deeds are performed—the greater and the more heroic for the fact that they are simple, unseen, hidden in the everyday life of the factory districts or remote villages, performed by people who are not in the habit (and lack the opportunity) of shouting from the housetops about every success they achieve.

Even if the opposite were the case—although I know that such an assumption would be wrong—even if for every hundred correct things we did we committed ten thousand mistakes, our revolution would still be—and it will be in the judgment of history—great and invincible; for this is the first time that not a minority, not the rich alone, not the educated alone, but the real masses, the overwhelming

<sup>\*</sup> See page 71 in this volume.—Ed.

majority of the working people are themselves building a new life and are by their own experience solving the most difficult problems of socialist organisation.

Every mistake committed in the course of such work, in the course of this most conscientious and sincere effort of tens of millions of simple workers and peasants in reorganising their entire lives—every such mistake is worth a thousand, nay, a million "infallible" successes of the exploiting minority, successes in fooling and cheating the working people. For only through such mistakes will the workers and peasants learn to build the new life, learn to dispense with capitalists; only in this way will they hew a road for themselves—through thousands of obstacles—to victorious socialism.

Mistakes are being committed in the course of their revolutionary work by our peasants, who at one stroke, in one night, the night of October 25 [November 7], 1917, completely abolished private property in land and are now, month after month—overcoming enormous difficulties, rectifying their mistakes—solving in practice the most difficult problems of organising new conditions of economic life, of fighting the kulaks, of ensuring land for the toilers (and not for the rich) and of going over to communist large-scale farming.

Mistakes are being committed in the course of their revolutionary work by our workers, who in a few months nationalised nearly all the large factories and works and by arduous everyday labour are learning to manage whole branches of industry, learning to run nationalised factories, overcoming the enormous resistance of conservatism, petty bourgeois ideology and selfishness, and brick by brick are laying the foundations of *new* social ties, of a *new* labour discipline, of a *new* workers' trade union authority over their members.

Mistakes are being committed in the course of their revolutionary work by our Soviets, which were created as far back as 1905 by the powerful upsurge of the masses. The Soviets of workers and peasants are a new type of state, a new and higher type of democracy; they are the form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, a method of administering the state without the bourgeoisie and against the bourgeoisie. For the first time democracy is serving the masses, the working people, and has ceased to be a democracy for the rich, as democracy in all the bourgeois republics, even the most democratic, still is. For the first time the masses are solving, on a scale covering hundreds of millions of people, the problem of realising the dictator-

ship of the proletarians and semi-proletarians—and unless this problem is solved one cannot speak about socialism.

Let pedants, or those who are incurably stuffed with bourgeois-democratic, or parliamentarian, prejudices, shake their heads in perplexity over our Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies and point, for example, to the absence of direct elections. These people have forgotten nothing and have learnt nothing from the great upheavals of 1914-18. The dictatorship of the proletariat and the new democracy for the working people—civil war and the drawing of large masses into politics—cannot be combined at one stroke and cannot be fitted into the hackneyed forms of routine parliamentary democracy. The Soviet Republic that is rising before us is the outline of a new world, the world of socialism. And it is not surprising that this world does not come forth complete and at one stroke like Minerva from the head of Jupiter.

Whereas the old bourgeois-democratic constitutions wax eloquent over formal equality and the right of assembly, our proletarian and peasant Soviet Constitution brushes aside the hypocrisy of formal equality. When the bourgeois republicans overturned thrones, no one troubled about formal equality between monarchists and republicans. When it is a matter of overthrowing the bourgeoisie, only traitors or idiots will strive for formal equal rights for the bourgeoisie. The "right of assembly" for workers and peasants is not worth a cent if all the best buildings are in the possession of the bourgeoisie. Our Soviets confiscated all the good buildings in town and country from the rich and handed them all over to the workers and peasants for *their* unions and meetings. That is *our* right of assembly—for the working people. That is the meaning and content of our Soviet, Socialist Constitution.

And that is why we are all so profoundly convinced that no matter what misfortunes may yet befall it, the Republic of Soviets is invincible.

It is invincible because every blow struck by rabid imperialism, every defeat inflicted upon us by the international bourgeoisie, rouses more and more peasants and workers for the struggle, teaches them at the cost of enormous sacrifice, hardens them and inspires fresh mass heroism.

We know that help from you, comrades American workers, will, perhaps, not come very soon, for the development of the revolution in the various countries proceeds in different forms and with different degrees of rapidity (nor can it be otherwise). We know that the

European proletarian revolution may not flare up within the next few weeks, however quickly it may have been maturing lately. We place our stakes on the inevitability of the international revolution; but that does not mean that we are fools enough to place our stakes on the inevitability of the revolution coming on some definite and early date. We have witnessed two great revolutions in our country, in 1905 and in 1917, and we know that revolutions are not made to order, nor by agreement. We know that circumstances have advanced our Russian detachment of the socialist proletariat to the forefront not because of our merits, but because of the exceptional backwardness of Russia, and that individual revolutions may suffer a series of defeats before the international revolution breaks out.

In spite of that we are firmly convinced that we are invincible, because humanity will not be broken by the imperialist butchery; on the contrary, it will get the upper hand of it. And the first country to break the convict chain of imperialist war was our country. We suffered severe losses in the struggle to break this chain, but we broke it. We stand free of imperialist dependence and have raised in the sight of the whole world the banner of struggle for the complete overthrow of imperialism.

We are now as if in a besieged fortress until other detachments of the international socialist revolution come to our aid. But these detachments exist, they are more numerous than ours, they are maturing, growing and gaining strength as the atrocities of imperialism continue. The workers are breaking with their social-traitors, the Gomperses, Hendersons, Renaudels, Scheidemanns and Renners.\* The workers are advancing slowly but surely towards Communist, Bolshevik tactics, towards the proletarian revolution, which alone is capable of saving perishing culture and perishing mankind.

In short, we are invincible, for the world proletarian revolution is invincible.

August 20, 1918.

Pravda, No. 178, August 22, 1918.

<sup>•</sup> Right-wing leaders of American, English, French, German, and Austrian socialist and trade union movements.—Ed.

#### SPEECHES ON THE WAR

I

COMRADES, today our party is arranging meetings to explain what we Communists are fighting for.

The most concise answer to this question would be that we are fighting for the termination of the imperialist war and for socialism.

Right at the very outbreak of the war, when reaction and tsardom were in the saddle, we declared that it was a criminal war and that the only way out of it was to convert it from an imperialist war into a civil war.

In those days many were not clear as to the connection between the imperialist war and socialism; even many Socialists thought that this war, like others, would end by the conclusion of peace.

But four years of war have taught people a lot. It is now becoming clearer and clearer that there is no other way out. The Russian Revolution is being followed by the growth of revolution in all the belligerent countries. Why is this so? To answer that question it is necessary to explain the attitude of the Communists towards the war, to give our opinion of it. We regard all wars which are the result of the rapacious ambitions of kings and capitalists as criminal, because they are fatal to the labouring classes and bring rich spoils to the ruling bourgeoisie.

But there are some wars which the working class must regard as just wars, the only just wars. These are wars for emancipation from slavery, from the yoke of the capitalists. And such wars there must be, for we cannot secure our emancipation except by a struggle.

When the war broke out in 1914 between the Germans on the one hand and the British and French on the other to determine how they were to divide up the earth among themselves, who was to have the right to oppress the whole world, the capitalists of both camps

tried to disguise their predatory aims by talking about "national defence"; it was with fairy tales like this that they fed the masses.

Millions of people have perished in this war, millions have been crippled. It has become worldwide. And more and more insistently the question is being asked: What is the purpose of these unnecessary sacrifices?

England and Germany are drenched in blood, yet there is no way out of the war; even if some of the imperialist countries were to stop fighting, others would continue.

The capitalists have overreached themselves, they have grabbed more than they can hold. Meanwhile, the armies are becoming demoralised; there are deserters everywhere. The mountains of Italy are swarming with them; in France soldiers are refusing to fight, and even in Germany the old discipline has declined.

The French and German soldiers are beginning to realise that they must reverse their front and turn their guns against their own governments; for it is impossible to end this bloody war under the capitalist system. Hence the growing realisation that the workers of all countries must take up the struggle against the capitalists of all countries.

It is no easy matter to create a socialist system. The civil war is bound to continue for many a long month, perhaps for many a long year; and this should be clear to every Russian, for he knows how difficult it is to overthrow the ruling class and what a desperate resistance the Russian landlords and capitalists are putting up.

There is no country in Europe in which the workers are not in sympathy with the Bolsheviks and are not convinced that the time will come when they will overthrow their own government, just as the Russian workers have overthrown theirs.

We Russian Communists so far stand alone, because our detachment has proved to be ahead of all the others. We have been cut off from our comrades; but we had to act first because our country was the most backward. Our revolution was begun as a general revolution, and we shall tackle our problems with the help of the workers and peasants of all countries.

Our tasks are hard and difficult; many undesirable and pernicious elements are joining our ranks. But the work has begun, and even if we do make mistakes, it should not be forgotten that every mistake is an education and a lesson.

Capitalism is an international force, and it can therefore be destroyed only in all countries, not in one alone. The war against the Czechoslovaks is a war against the capitalists of the whole world.

The workers are rising and joining this struggle; the Petrograd and Moscow workers are flocking into the army, and the army is becoming imbued with the idea of fighting for the victory of socialism.

The proletarian masses will ensure the victory of the Soviet Republic over the Czechoslovaks and the possibility of holding out until the world socialist revolution breaks out.

Speech delivered August 23, 1918.

Petrogradskaya Pravda, No. 185 (411), August 27, 1918.

II

WHAT is the essence of our program? The conquest of socialism. At this moment of the World War, there is no way out of it except by the victory of socialism. But many do not realise this. The majority of mankind are now opposed to this bloody slaughter, but they cannot see its direct connection with the capitalist system. The horrors of this war are obvious even to the bourgeoisie, but you cannot expect it to connect the end of the war with the end of the capitalist system. This, however, is the fundamental idea which has always distinguished the Bolsheviks, and the revolutionary Socialists of other countries, from those who would like to establish peace on earth while preserving the capitalist system intact.

What are wars waged for? We know that the majority of wars were fought in the interests of dynasties, and were called dynastic wars. But some wars were fought in the interests of the oppressed. Spartacus raised the standard of war in defence of the enslaved class. Wars of this nature were waged in the period of colonial oppression—a period which continues to this day—in the period of slavery, etc. These wars were just wars and must not be condemned.

When we talk about the present European war and condemn it, it is because it is being waged by the oppressor class.

What is the aim of the present war? If the diplomats of all countries are to be believed, it is being waged on the part of France and England to defend the small nationalities from the barbarians, the German

Huns. Germany, for her part, is waging the war against the Cossack barbarians who are menacing the civilised German people, and to defend the fatherland from the attack of its enemies.

But we know that the way to this war was paved beforehand, that it steadily ripened and became inevitable. It was just as inevitable as war is between America and Japan. Why?

Because capitalism has concentrated the wealth of the world in the hands of a few states and divided up the earth to the last bit; any further division, any further enrichment can now take place only at the expense of others, as the enrichment of one state at the expense of another. The issue can only be settled by force—and, accordingly, war between the world marauders has become inevitable.

This war has till now been headed by two principal firms—England and Germany. England was the strongest of the colony-owning countries. Although England herself had a population of not more than 40,000,000, the population of her colonies exceeded 400,000,000. She had long ago, by right of might, seized the colonies of others; she had seized huge territories and was exploiting them. But economically she had fallen behind Germany during the last fifty years. Germany's industry had overtaken the industry of Great Britain. Germany's large-scale state capitalism had combined with the bureaucracy—and Germany beat all records.

The rivalry for supremacy between these two giants could only be settled by force.

There was a time when Britain, by the right of might, seized territory from Holland, Portugal, and other countries. Then, Germany appeared on the scene and declared that it was now her turn to enrich herself at the expense of others.

That is the root of the whole matter—the struggle between the strongest powers for the division of the world. And as both sides possess hundreds of millions of capital, their struggle has become worldwide.

We know how many secret crimes have been committed in connection with this war. The secret treaties we have published show that the lofty reasons given for the war are just empty talk, and that, just like Russia, all the states had sordid treaties for enriching themselves at the expense of small and weak nationalities. The result was that those who were strong grew richer still, while those who were weak were crushed.

Individuals cannot be blamed for the war; it would be wrong to blame kings and tsars for having brought about this holocaust—it was brought about by capital. Capitalism is a blind alley. This blind alley is imperialism, which dictated war between the rivals for world supremacy.

The claim that the war is being waged for the liberation of small nationalities is a monstrous lie. Both marauders continue to stand glaring bloodthirstily at each other, while about them many a small nationality lies crushed and bleeding.

And we say that there is no way out of the imperialist holocaust except by civil war.

When we said this in 1914 we were told that it was like a straight line extending into space; but our analysis has been corroborated by the whole subsequent course of events. Today we find chauvinism's generals being left without an army. In France, which had suffered most from the war and was most responsive to the cry of defending the fatherland, for the enemy stood at the gates of Paris—in that country the defencists recently suffered a fiasco; to be sure it was at the hands of vacillating people like Longuet \* that chauvinism suffered this fiasco—but that is not important. We know that in the early days of the revolution in Russia the power fell into the hands of people who spouted words but kept the old tsarist treaties in their pockets.

And if in Russia the development of parties towards the Left proceeded more rapidly, this was partly due to the accursed regime that existed before the revolution, and to our Revolution of 1905.

But in Europe, where a shrewd and calculating capitalism rules, where it possesses a powerful and well-knit organisation, the fumes of nationalism are wearing off more slowly. Nevertheless, we can unmistakably see that the imperialist war is dying a slow and painful death.

There is quite reliable information to show that the German army is affected by demoralisation, and has taken to profiteering. Nor could it be otherwise. The moment the soldier wakes up and begins to understand that he is being killed and maimed solely in the interests of the bourgeoisie, demoralisation is bound to spread among the masses.

The French army, which kept its morale longer than any of the \*Jean Longuet, French Socialist leader.—Ed.

others, likewise shows that it is not immune to the process of demoralisation. The trial of Malvy \* has somewhat lifted the curtain in France, too, and has revealed that thousands of soldiers have refused to go to the front.

All this is but the herald of events similar to those in Russia; except that in the civilised countries the civil war will be far more brutal than in Russia. We see that in the case of Finland, the most democratic country in Europe, the first country to give women the vote. Yet this country took savage and ruthless reprisals on the Red Army men; and the latter did not surrender easily. This shows what a terrible fate awaits these civilised countries.

You will thus see how absurd was the accusation levelled at the Bolsheviks of being responsible for the demoralisation of the Russian army.

We represent only one detachment, a detachment which has advanced somewhat ahead of the other workers' detachments—not because it is any better than the others, but because the stupid policy of our bourgeoisie enabled the working class of Russia to throw off its yoke sooner. Today, in fighting for a socialist system in Russia, we are fighting for socialism all over the world. Today, the Bolsheviks are the sole subject of discussion at all workers' meetings and gatherings in all countries. They know us; they know that what we are now doing is furthering the cause of the whole world, that we are working for them.

When we abolish private ownership of land, nationalise the factories and the banks, which are now engaged in organising industry, cries are raised on all sides that we are committing hosts of mistakes. That may be true, but the workers are creating socialism themselves, and no matter what mistakes we make we are learning from experience and paving the way for the art of making revolutions without mistakes.

That is why we are the objects of such savage hatred. That is why the French imperialists do not grudge tens and hundreds of millions to support counter-revolution; for it would mean the repayment to France of the Russian debts, running into billions, which the workers and peasants annulled.

Today the whole bourgeois press amuses itself by filling its columns with such lies as that the Council of People's Commissars has moved to Tula, that it was seen ten days ago in Kronstadt, and so on, that

<sup>\*</sup> Graft scandal involving the French government,-Ed.

Moscow is on the verge of falling and that the Soviet government has fled.

All the bourgeois, all the former Romanovs, all the capitalists and landlords support the Czechoslovaks, whose revolt to them means the likelihood of the fall of the Soviet government. The Allies know this, and they are launching one of their fiercest battles. What they lacked in Russia was a nucleus, and now they have found it in the Czechoslovaks. The latter's revolt therefore must not be treated lightly. This revolt was the signal for a number of counter-revolutionary risings; our revolutionary history has recently been marked by many a kulak and White Guard revolt.

The position of the Soviet government is grave, and we must not close our eyes to the fact. But look around you, and you cannot but be filled with confidence in our ultimate victory.

Germany has suffered a number of defeats, and it is no secret that these defeats are the result of "treason" on the part of German soldiers; French soldiers refused to go to the front at a very critical moment because of the arrest of Comrade André whom the government was compelled to release in order to get the troops to move, and so on and so forth.

We have made many sacrifices. The Brest-Litovsk Peace was one painful wound; we expected a revolution in Germany, but the time for it was not yet ripe. It is ripening now; revolution is undoubtedly brewing and is inevitable. But only a fool can ask when revolution will break out in the West. Revolutions can never be calculated; they cannot be foretold; they come of themselves. Revolution is brewing and is bound to flare up. A week before the February Revolution, did anybody know it was about to break out? When the mad priest \* led the people to the palace, did anybody think the Revolution of 1905 was about to break out? But revolution is brewing and is bound to come.

And we must preserve the Soviet government until it begins. Our mistakes must serve as a lesson to the Western proletariat, to the international socialist movement. The salvation of the international revolution as well as of the Russian Revolution lies on the Czechoslovak front. And we already have news that the army which time

<sup>\*</sup> Father Capon who led a procession of St. Petersburg workers to the Winter Palace on January 9 (22), 1905. This demonstration was ruthlessly put down by the Tsarist troops.—Ed.

and again was betrayed by the generals, which is weary beyond all endurance, that this army, with the coming of our comrades, the Communists, the workers, is beginning to win victories, is beginning to display revolutionary enthusiasm in the struggle against the world bourgeoisie.

And we believe that victory will be ours and that by our victory we shall save the cause of socialism.

Speech at a Moscow meeting, August 23, 1918.

Published in first (1926) edition of V. I. Lenin's Collected Works, Vol. XX, Book 2, 1926.

### EDUCATION AND THE WAR

COMRADES, we are passing through one of the most critical, important and interesting moments of history—a moment when the world socialist revolution is in the making. It is now becoming apparent even to those who stood remote from socialist theories and forecasts that this war will not end as it began, that is, by the conclusion of peace in the usual way between the old imperialist governments. The Russian Revolution has shown that the war is inevitably leading to the disintegration of capitalist society in general, that it is being converted into a war of the toilers against the exploiters. Therein lies the significance of the Russian Revolution.

No matter how great the difficulties in our path, no matter how many tens of millions are lavished in all countries in the attempt to disseminate lies and slanders about the Russian Revolution, the working class all over the world instinctively feels that the cause of the Russian Revolution is its own cause. Parallel with the war between the two groups of imperialists, everywhere another war is beginning, the war which the working class, infected by the example of the Russian Revolution, is declaring against its home bourgeoisie. All the signs go to show that Austria and Italy are on the eve of revolution; the disintegration of the old order in these countries is proceeding rapidly. In the stronger and more stable countries, such as Germany, England and France, the same process is going on, although in a somewhat different and less noticeable form. The collapse of the capitalist system and of the capitalist war is inevitable.

The German imperialists have been unable to stifle the socialist revolution. The price Germany had to pay for crushing the revolution in Red Latvia, Finland and the Ukraine was the demoralisation of her army. The defeat of Germany on the Western front is largely due to the fact that her old army no longer exists. What the diplomats

talked about half jokingly—the "Russification" of the German soldiers—now turns out to be no joke for them, but a bitter truth. The spirit of protest is rising, "treason" is becoming a common thing in the German army.

On the other hand, England and France are making a last effort to preserve their position. They are hurling themselves on the Russian Republic and straining the fibres of capitalism to breaking point. Even the bourgeois press has to admit that a change of spirit has begun among the working masses: in France, the idea of "national defence" is breaking down; in England, the working class is denouncing the "civil truce." That means that the British and French imperialists have staked their last card—and we can say with the utmost confidence that that "card will be beaten." No matter how loudly certain groups cry that the Bolsheviks are only backed by a minority, they must admit that they cannot find the forces inside Russia to fight the Bolsheviks, and are compelled to resort to foreign intervention. The working class of France and Britain are thus being forced to take part in an obvious war of conquest, the purpose of which is to crush the Russian Revolution. That means that British and French, and, consequently, world imperialism, is at its last gasp.

Hard as it was to create a war situation again in a country where the people themselves had suppressed the war and smashed the old army, hard as it was to form an army in the midst of acute civil war, we have overcome all difficulties. The army has been formed, and victory over the Czechoslovaks, the White Guards, the landlords, the capitalists and the kulaks is assured. The working masses understand that they are not waging war in the interests of a handful of capitalists, but in their own cause. The Russian workers and peasants have for the first time obtained the opportunity of administering the factories and the land themselves, and that experience was bound to have its effect. Our army has been formed from picked elements, from peasants and workers conscious of their purpose. Each of them goes to the front in the consciousness that he is fighting for the destiny of the international revolution as well as the Russian Revolution; for we may rest assured that the Russian Revolution is only a sample, only the first step in the series of revolutions in which the war is bound to end.

One of the component parts of the struggle we are now waging is public education. Hypocrisy and lies we can counter with the full and open truth. The war has shown what the "will of the majority" means, a phrase used by the bourgeoisie as a camouflage; it has shown that a handful of plutocrats drive whole nations to the shambles in their own interests. The belief that bourgeois democracy serves the interests of the majority has now been thoroughly undermined. Our Constitution, our Soviets, which were something new to Europe, but with which we were already acquainted from the experience of the 1905 Revolution, serve as splendid agitation and propaganda material, completely exposing the lying and hypocritical character of their democracy. We have openly proclaimed the rule of the toilers and exploited—and there lies the source of our strength and independence.

And the same is true of public education: the more cultured the bourgeois state, the more subtly did it lie when it declared that the school could stand above politics and serve society as a whole.

As a matter of fact, the school was turned into nothing but an instrument of the class rule of the bourgeoisie; it was thoroughly imbued with the bourgeois caste spirit; its purpose was to supply the capitalists with obedient lackeys and intelligent workers. The war has shown that the marvels of modern technology are used as a means of exterminating millions of workers and creating fabulous profits for the capitalists who are making fortunes out of the war. The war has been internally undermined, for we have exposed their lie by countering it with the truth. We say that our work in the sphere of education is part of the struggle for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie; we publicly declare that education divorced from life and politics is a lie and hypocrisy. What was the meaning of the sabotage declared by the best educated representatives of the old bourgeois culture? This sabotage showed better than any agitator, better than all our speeches, better than thousands of pamphlets that these people regard education as their monopoly and have turned it into an instrument of their rule over the so-called "common people." They used their education to attempt to frustrate the work of socialist construction, and came out openly against the working masses.

In the revolutionary struggle, the Russian workers and peasants have received their final training. They have seen that our system alone assures their genuine rule, they have been able to convince themselves that the state is doing everything to assist the workers and the poor peasants in completely crushing the resistance of the kulaks, the landlords, and the capitalists.

The working people are thirsting for knowledge, because they need

it in order to win. Nine-tenths of the working masses have realised that knowledge is a weapon in their struggle for emancipation, that their failures are due to lack of education, and that now it is up to them to make education really available to all. Our cause is assured because the masses have themselves set about the work of building a new, socialist Russia. They are learning from their own experience, from their failures and mistakes, and they see how indispensable education is for the victorious conclusion of the struggle they are waging. In spite of the apparent collapse of many institutions and the jubilation of the saboteur intellectuals, we find that experience in the struggle has taught the masses to take their destinies into their own hands. All who really sympathise with the people, all the best of the teachers will come to our aid, and that is a sure pledge that the cause of socialism will triumph.

Speech at First All-Russian Educational Congress, August 28, 1918.

Published in first (1926) edition of V. I. Lenin's Collected Works, Vol. XX, Book 2.

# NEWSPAPER REPORTS OF TWO MOSCOW SPEECHES

I

THE bourgeoisie made itself the master of revolutionary Russia for a time, ruling with the support of the social-compromisers from February to October.

With the first steps taken by the Milyukov-Guchkov government, the masses of the people began to realise where the bourgeoisie was leading them. But the vile deeds of the Russian capitalists and landlords, who were in fact continuing the policy of the Tsar the people had overthrown, were masked by the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, who flaunted socialist colours but were actually betraying socialism in the interests of the British and French stock exchanges.

Swept aside by the October insurrection, and ousted from the revolution, the compromisers set about their customary work in the Ukraine, the Caucasus, in Siberia and on the Volga. They succeeded at last in getting the local Soviets overthrown and the active Bolsheviks turned over to the tender mercies of the Czechoslovak hirelings and the Russian White Guards.

But what do we find in these places rising out of the ruins of the Soviets? The complete triumph of the capitalists and landlords, and the groans and curses of the workers and peasants. The land has been returned to the nobility and the mills and factories to their former owners. The eight-hour day has been abolished, the workers' and peasants' organisations suppressed, and the tsarist Zemstvos and the old police regime restored in their place.

Let every worker and peasant who is still undecided as to the government he wants take a glance at the Volga, Siberia, and the Ukraine, and the answer will be clear and unmistakable.

Speech delivered August 30, 1918.

Pravda, No. 185, August 31, 1918.

II

WE Bolsheviks are constantly accused of forsaking the mottoes: equality and fraternity. Let us examine the question frankly.

What government replaced tsardom? The Guchkov-Milyukov government, which set about convening a Constituent Assembly in Russia. What was really at the back of these activities aimed supposedly in the interests of the people liberated from their millennial voke? It was that behind Guchkov and similar champions there had gathered a gang of capitalists who were pursuing their own imperialist ends. And when Kerensky, Chernov and Co. climbed into the saddle, this government, so shaky and so devoid of all foundation, was only concerned with the vital interests of their friends, the bourgeoisie. The power in fact passed into the hands of the kulaks, and the labouring masses got no benefit from it. We find the same thing in other countries. Take America, that freest and most civilised of countries. There you have a democratic republic. But what do we find? The brazen rule of a handful, not even of millionaires, but of billionaires, while the people languish in slavery and servitude. If all the mills, factories, banks, and the entire wealth of the country belong to the capitalists, and side by side with the democratic republic you have feudal servitude for the labouring millions and unrelieved destitution where is your boasted equality and fraternity?

No, wherever the democrats prevail, there you have robbery, genuine and unadorned. We know the true nature of these so-called democracies.

The secret treaties of the French Republic, of Great Britain and the other democracies have clearly revealed the underlying nature and essence of this whole business. Their aims and interests are as criminal and predatory as Germany's. The war has opened our eyes, and we clearly see the robber and plunderer in the guise of the defender of the fatherland. This assault of the marauders must be countered by revolutionary action, by revolutionary creative effort. True, to secure unity, especially of the peasant revolutionary elements, in such exceptional times as these, is no easy matter; but we believe in the creative power and social ardour of the vanguard of the revolution, the industrial proletariat. And the workers are now fully aware that as long as minds are swayed by the fairy tale of a democratic republic and a Constituent Assembly, so long will fifty million rubles continue

to be spent daily for war aims that are disastrous to them, and they will never secure their liberation from capitalist oppression. It was because they realised this that the workers created their Soviets.

Similarly, the realities and actualities of life have taught the workers to understand that as long as the landlords are snugly installed in their mansions and magic castles, so long will the right of assembly be a fiction, and mean, if anything, the right to assemble only in the world hereafter. You will agree that to promise freedom to the workers and at the same time to leave the palaces, the land, the factories and all wealth in the hands of the capitalists and landlords scarcely smacks of liberty and equality. We, for our part, have only one maxim, only one motto: all who labour have the right to enjoy the benefits of life. The idlers and parasites who suck the blood of the labouring people must be deprived of these benefits. And we proclaim: Everything for the workers, everything for the labouring people!

We know how difficult all this is to achieve, we know the furious resistance the bourgeoisie is putting up; but we believe in the ultimate victory of the proletariat, for if it was capable of extricating itself from the monstrous hardships of the imperialist war storm and of erecting the edifice of socialist revolution on the ruins of the edifice it has destroyed, it is bound to win.

And, in fact, forces are uniting everywhere. Now that we have abolished private property in land, a quickening process is going on, uniting the proletariat of town and country. And in the West, too, we observe the growing awakening of the class consciousness of the workers. The workers of Great Britain, France, Italy, and other countries are issuing one manifesto and demand after another, indicating that the triumph of the cause of world revolution is near at hand. And scorning the hypocrisy, the insolent outcries and lamentations of the piratical bourgeoisie, our task today is to carry on our revolutionary work. All forces must be thrown onto the Czechoslovak front, so as to utterly crush this whole gang who raise the cry of liberty and equality as a smokescreen to conceal the shooting down of hundreds and thousands of workers and peasants.

We have only one alternative: victory or death! \*

Speech at Mikhelson factory, Moscow, August 30, 1918. Izvestia, No. 188 (452), September 1, 1918.

\*As Lenin was leaving the Mikhelson factory meeting, an attempt was made on his life by the Socialist-Revolutionary Dora Kaplan.—Ed.

## COMRADE WORKERS, ONWARD TO THE LAST DECISIVE FIGHT!

THE Soviet Republic is surrounded by enemies. But it will defeat its enemies, both external and internal. A rising spirit which will ensure victory is already perceptible among the working class masses. We already see how frequent the sparks and explosions of the revolutionary conflagration in Western Europe have become, inspiring us with the assurance that the triumph of the international working class revolution is not far off.

The external foe of the Russian Soviet Socialist Republic at the present moment is British, French, American, and Japanese imperialism. This foe is attacking Russia; it is filching our territory; it has seized Archangel and (if the French newspapers are to be believed) has advanced from Vladivostok to Nikolsk-Ussuriisk. This foe has bribed the generals and officers of the Czechoslovak corps. This enemy is attacking peaceful Russia with the ferocity and voracity of the Germans in February, the only difference being that the British and Japanese are out not only to seize and plunder Russian territory but also to overthrow the Soviet government so as to "restore the front," i.e., once more to draw Russia into the imperialist (or, more simply, the robber) war between England and Germany.

The British and Japanese capitalists want to restore the power of the landlords and capitalists in Russia in order to share with them the booty plundered in the war; they want to enslave the Russian workers and peasants to British and French capital, to squeeze out of them interest on the billions advanced in loans, and to quench the fire of socialist revolution which has broken out in our country and which is threatening to spread all over the world.

The British and Japanese imperialist brutes are not strong enough to occupy and subjugate Russia. Even neighbouring Germany is not strong enough for that, as was shown by her "experiment" in the Ukraine. The British and Japanese counted on catching us unawares.

They failed. The workers of Petrograd, followed by the workers of Moscow, and Moscow by the entire central industrial region, are rising; these workers are rising solidly, with growing persistence and courage and in ever larger numbers. That is a pledge of our victory.

In launching their attack on peaceable Russia the British and Japanese capitalist robbers are also counting on their alliance with the internal foe of the Soviet government. We all know who that internal foe is. It is the capitalists, the landlords, the kulaks, and their offspring, who hate the government of the workers and toiling peasants—the peasants who do not suck the blood of their fellow-villagers.

A wave of kulak revolts is sweeping over Russia. The kulak harbours a fierce hatred for the Soviet government and is prepared to strangle and massacre hundreds of thousands of workers. We know very well that if the kulaks were to gain the upper hand they would ruthlessly slaughter hundreds of thousands of workers, would, in alliance with the landlords and capitalists, restore penal conditions for the workers, abolish the eight-hour day and once again place the mills and factories under the yoke of the capitalists.

Such was the case in all earlier European revolutions when, as a result of the weakness of the workers, the kulaks succeeded in turning back from a republic to a monarchy, from government by the toilers to the despotism of the exploiters, the rich and the parasites. This has happened under our very eyes in Latvia, Finland, the Ukraine, and Georgia. Everywhere the avaricious, bloated and bestial kulaks joined hands with the landlords and capitalists against the workers and against the poor generally. Everywhere the kulaks wreaked their vengeance on the working class with incredible ferocity. Everywhere they joined hands with the foreign capitalists against the workers of their own country. That is the way the Cadets, the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks have been acting: we have only to remember their exploits in "Czechoslovakia." That is the way the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, in their crass stupidity and spinelessness, acted too when they revolted in Moscow, thus assisting the White Guards in Yaroslavl and the Czechoslovaks and the Whites in Kazan. It was not without reason that the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries were praised by Kerensky and his friends, the French imperialists.

Doubt is out of the question. The kulaks are rabid foes of the Soviet government. Either the kulaks massacre vast numbers of workers, or the workers ruthlessly suppress the risings of the predatory kulak minority of the people against the government of the toilers. There can be no middle course. Peace is out of the question: even if they have quarrelled, the kulak can easily come to terms with the landlord, the tsar and the priest, but with the working class never.

That is why we call the fight against the kulaks the *last*, decisive fight. That does not mean that there may not be many more kulak revolts, or that there may not be many attacks on the Soviet government by foreign capitalism. The words, the *last* struggle, imply that the last and most numerous of the *exploiting* classes has risen against us in our own country.

The kulaks are the most brutal, callous and savage exploiters, who in the history of other countries have time and again restored the power of the landlords, tsars, priests, and capitalists. The kulaks are more numerous than the landlords and capitalists. Nevertheless, the kulaks are a minority of the people.

Let us take it that there are about fifteen million peasant households in Russia, taking Russia as she was before the robbers deprived her of the Ukraine and other territories. Of these fifteen million, probably ten million are poor peasants who live by the sale of their labour power, or who are in bondage to the rich, or who lack surpluses of grain and have been most impoverished by the burdens of war. About three million must be regarded as middle peasants, while barely two million consist of kulaks, rich peasants, grain profiteers. These bloodsuckers have grown rich on the want suffered by the people in the war; they have raked in thousands and hundreds of thousands of rubles by screwing up the price of grain and other products. These spiders have grown fat at the expense of the peasants who have been ruined by the war, at the expense of the hungry workers. These leeches sucked the blood of the toilers and grew richer as the workers in the cities and factories starved. These vampires have been gathering the landed estates into their hands; they keep on enslaving the poor peasants.

Ruthless war must be waged on the kulaks! Death to them! Hatred and contempt for the parties which defend them—the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, the Mensheviks, and now the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries! The workers must crush the kulak revolts with an iron hand,

for the kulaks have formed an alliance with the foreign capitalists against the toilers of their own country.

The kulaks take advantage of the ignorance, the disunity and isolation of the poor peasants. They incite them against the workers. Sometimes they bribe them by permitting them to "make a bit," a hundred rubles or so, by profiteering in grain (at the same time robbing the poor peasants of many thousands of rubles). The kulaks try to win the support of the middle peasants, and sometimes they succeed.

But there is no reason why the working class should quarrel with the middle peasant. The working class cannot make peace with the kulak, but it may seek, and is seeking, an agreement with the middle peasant. The workers' government, the Bolshevik government, has proved that in deed as well as in word.

We proved it by passing the law on the "socialisation of the land" and strictly carrying it into effect. That law contains numerous concessions to the interests and views of the middle peasant.

We proved that (the other day) by trebling bread prices; for we fully realise that the earnings of the middle peasant are often disproportionate to present-day prices for manufactured goods and must be raised.

Every class-conscious worker will explain this to the middle peasant and will patiently, persistently, and repeatedly point out to him that socialism is infinitely more beneficial for the middle peasant than a government of tsars, landlords, and capitalists.

The workers' government has never wronged and never will wrong the middle peasant. But the government of the tsars, landlords, capitalists, and kulaks not only always wronged the middle peasant, but stifled, plundered, and ruined him outright. And this is true of all countries without exception, Russia included.

Close alliance and complete fusion with the poor peasants; concessions to and agreement with the middle peasants; ruthless suppression of the kulaks, those bloodsuckers, vampires, plunderers of the people and profiteers, who batten on famine—such is the program of the class-conscious worker. Such is the policy of the working class.

Written August 1918.

### LETTER TO CULTURAL ORGANISATIONS

DEAR COMRADES: I heartily thank you for your good wishes. I, for my part, wish you every success in your labours.

One of the chief conditions for the victory of the socialist revolution is that the working class realises that during the period of transition from capitalism to socialism it must rule. The rule of the vanguard of all the toilers and exploited, that is, of the proletariat, is essential in this transitional period if classes are to be completely abolished, if the resistance of the exploiters is to be suppressed, and if the entire mass of toilers and exploited—crushed, downtrodden and disunited by capitalism—are to be united around the urban workers and in close alliance with them.

All our successes have been due to the fact that the workers have grasped this and have set about governing the state through their Soviets.

But the workers have not yet grasped this *sufficiently* and are often too timid in promoting workers to governing the state.

This is what you must strive for, comrades. Let the proletarian cultural and educational organisations help towards this. That will be a pledge of further success and of the final victory of the socialist revolution.

Greetings, V. Ulyanov (Lenin)

Letter to Presidium of Conference of Proletarian Cultural and Educational Organisations.

Pravda, No. 201, September 19, 1918.

### THE CHARACTER OF OUR NEWSPAPERS

FAR too much space is devoted to political agitation on old themes—to political fireworks. Too little space is devoted to the building of the new life, to facts and more facts about this.

Why not write twenty or even ten lines instead of two hundred or four hundred about simple, generally known and clear things, which are already to a large extent understood by the masses: the despicable treachery of the Mensheviks, those lackeys of the bourgeoisie; or the Anglo-Japanese invasion for the purpose of restoring the sacred rights of capital; or the gnashing of teeth by the American billionaires against Germany, etc., etc.? These things should be written about, every new fact about them should be noted; but there is no need to write whole articles about them, to keep repeating the old arguments again and again; all that is wanted is a few lines, written in "telegraphic style," branding the new manifestations of old politics, which are already known and properly sized up.

In the "good old bourgeois times" the bourgeois press never referred to the "holy of holies"—the internal state of affairs in private factories, in private enterprises. This suited the interests of the bourgeoisie. But we must radically dissociate ourselves from this. We have not dissociated ourselves from it. The type of our newspapers has not yet changed in the way it should change in a society which is passing from capitalism to socialism.

Less politics. Politics has been fully "cleared up" and has been reduced to the struggle between two camps: the insurrectionary proletariat and a handful of capitalist slave-owners (with their pack of hounds, including the Mensheviks and others). I repeat, these politics can and should be dealt with very briefly.

More economics. But not economics in the sense of "general" arguments, learned reviews, high-brow plans, and other twaddle of that

sort, which, unfortunately, is too often just twaddle. No, we need economics in the sense of collecting, thoroughly sifting and studying the facts of the actual building up of the new life. Are successes really being achieved by the big factories, the agricultural communes, the Committees of Poor Peasants and the local Councils of National Economy in the building of the new economy? What sort of successes? Have they been proved? Is there not some fiction, boastfulness, intellectualist promises here ("things are being organised," "a plan has been drawn up," "efforts are being made," "we now pledge ourselves," "improvement beyond doubt," and other charlatan plans in the drawing up of which "we" are past masters)? How were these successes achieved? How can they be extended?

Where is the blackboard of factories which are lagging behind, which, after the factories have been nationalised, remain models of confusion, disintegration, filth, hooliganism, and idleness? There is no such list. But there are such factories. We are not performing our duty if we refrain from waging war against these "guardians of the traditions of capitalism." We are not Communists but ragpickers as long as we quietly tolerate such factories. We do not know how to wage the class war in the newspapers as the bourgeoisie waged it. Remember how effectively it hounded its class enemies in the press, how it reviled them, pilloried them and made their lives a misery. What about us? Does not the class struggle in the epoch of transition from capitalism to socialism mean protecting the interests of the working class against the handfuls, groups, strata of workers who persistently cling to the traditions (habits) of capitalism and continue to regard the Soviet state in the old way, give "it" as little work as possible, and of the worst quality possible, and squeeze out of "it" as much money as possible? Are there not plenty of such scoundrels, as, for example, among the compositors in Soviet printing shops, among the Sormovo and Putilov workers, etc.? How many of these have we caught, how many have we exposed, how many have we pilloried?

The press says nothing about this. And if it does, it says it in an official, bureaucratic way, not like a revolutionary press, not like the organ of the dictatorship of the class which by its deeds is showing that the resistance of the capitalists and of the loafers who are guarding capitalist habits will be crushed with an iron hand.

It is the same with the war. Do we denounce cowardly officers and incompetents? Have we disgraced inefficient regiments in the eyes of

Russia? Have we "caught" enough bad specimens who should be drummed out of the army for inefficiency, negligence, for being late, etc.? We are not waging a practical, ruthless, and truly revolutionary war against definite culprits. Too little is being done to train the masses with the help of living, concrete examples, and illustrations from all spheres of life—and yet this is the principal task of the press in the period of transition from capitalism to communism. Not enough attention is being paid to the workaday side of factory, village, and regimental life, where the new system is being built most of all, which most of all needs attention, publicity, public criticism, denunciation of incompetency, and appeals to learn from good example.

Less political fireworks. Less intellectualist arguments. Get closer to life. More attention to the way the masses of the workers and peasants are actually building something new in their everyday work. More testing to ascertain to what extent this something new is communistic.

Pravda, No. 202, September 20, 1918.

### THE CRISIS IN GERMANY

GERMANY is in the throes of a political crisis. The panicky bewilderment both of the government and of the exploiting classes in general has become abundantly clear to the whole people. The hopelessness of the military situation and the fact that the ruling classes lack all support among the working masses have been laid bare at one stroke. This crisis means either that the revolution has begun or that at any rate the masses have clearly realised that it is inevitable and imminent.

The government has, morally speaking, resigned and is in a state of hysterical indecision, wavering between a military dictatorship and a coalition cabinet. But a military dictatorship has, virtually speaking, been under test ever since the outbreak of the war, and just now it has ceased to be feasible, because the army has become unreliable. As to the admission of Scheidemann and Co. to the cabinet, that would only hasten the revolutionary outbreak and make it more widespread, more conscious, more firm and determined—after the thorough exposure of the pitiful impotence of these lackeys of the bourgeoisie, of these corrupt individuals, who are just like our Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, like the Hendersons and Sidney Webbs in England, the Albert Thomas and Renaudels in France, and so on.

The crisis in Germany has only begun. It will inevitably end in the transfer of political power to the German proletariat. The Russian proletariat is following events with the keenest attention and enthusiasm. Now even the blindest workers in the various countries will see that the Bolsheviks were right in basing their whole tactics on the support of a world workers' revolution, and in not fearing to bear heavy sacrifices. Today even the most ignorant will see how unspeakably vile was the betrayal of socialism by the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries when they formed an alliance with the predatory British and French bourgeoisie ostensibly to secure the annulment of

the Brest-Litovsk Peace. And it goes without saying that the Soviet government will not help the German imperialists by attempting to violate the Brest-Litovsk Peace, to tear it up at a moment when the anti-imperialist forces in Germany are beginning to seethe and boil, and when the spokesmen of the German bourgeoisie are beginning to excuse themselves to their people for having concluded such a peace, and to search for a way of "changing" their policy.

But the proletariat of Russia is not only following events with attention and enthusiasm. It is demanding that every nerve be strained to help the German workers, who have the gravest trials ahead of them, a most difficult transition from slavery to freedom, a most stubborn struggle with their own and British imperialism. The defeat of German imperialism will have the effect for a time of increasing the insolence, brutality, reaction, and annexatory attempts of British and French imperialism.

The Bolshevik working class of Russia has always been internationalistic in deed, and not only in word. It is unlike those scoundrels, the heroes and leaders of the Second International, who either went in for outright betrayal by forming an alliance with their bourgeoisie, or tried, by phrasemongering and excuses (as Kautsky, Otto Bauer and Co. did), to avoid revolution, and opposed all bold and great revolutionary action, all sacrifice of narrow national interests for the sake of furthering the proletarian revolution.

The Russian proletariat will understand that the greatest sacrifices are about to be demanded of it in the cause of internationalism. The time is approaching when circumstances may demand that we come to the aid of the German people, who are struggling for their liberation from their own imperialism, against British and French imperialism.

Let us begin to prepare for this at once. Let us show that the Russian worker is capable of working much harder, of fighting and dying much more self-sacrificingly, when not only the Russian revolution is at stake but also the international workers' revolution.

First of all, let us multiply our efforts in storing up grain stocks. Let us resolve to gather stocks of grain for every large elevator to help the German workers should they be hard pressed in their struggle for emancipation from the monstrosities and brutalities of imperialism. Let every party organisation, every trade union, every factory, workshop, form special connections with several rural areas, of their own

selection, with the object of strengthening the alliance with the peasants, of helping them and enlightening them, of vanquishing the kulaks, and of gathering up all surpluses of grain to the last ounce.

Let us, similarly, multiply our efforts in creating a proletarian Red Army. The tide of feeling has turned—we all know it, we all see it and feel it. The workers and labouring peasants have had a respite from the horrors of imperialist slaughter, they have realised and learnt from experience that war must be waged against the oppressors in defence of the gains of their revolution, the revolution of the working people, of their government, the Soviet government. An army is being created, a Red Army of workers and poor peasants, who are prepared for any sacrifice in defence of socialism. The army is growing in strength and is being tempered in battle with the Czechoslovaks and White Guards. A firm foundation has been laid, and we must now hasten the erection of the edifice itself.

We had decided to have an army of one million men by the spring; now we need an army of three million. We can have it. And we will have it.

In these past few days world history has gathered tremendous momentum in the world workers' revolution. The most kaleidoscopic changes are possible, there may be attempts to form an alliance of German and Anglo-French imperialism against the Soviet government.

And we too must speed up our preparations. We must multiply our efforts.

Let this be the slogan for the anniversary of the great October Revolution of the proletariat!

Let it be a pledge of the coming victories of the world proletarian revolution!

Letter to a joint meeting of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, Moscow Soviet, and representatives from factory committees and trade unions, October 3, 1918.

Published in Stenographic Report of the Fifth All-Russian Central Executive Committee, 1919.

### "THE PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION AND THE RENEGADE KAUTSKY"

THE ABOVE is the title of a pamphlet \* I have begun to write in criticism of Kautsky's pamphlet, *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat*, which has just appeared in Vienna. But as this work is taking longer than I expected, I have decided to request the *Pravda* to find space for a short article on the subject.

Over four years of a most exhausting and reactionary war have done their work. The pulse of an impending proletarian revolution is to be felt in Europe—in Austria, in Italy, in Germany, in France, and even in England (very significant, for example, is the article "Confessions of a Capitalist" in the July number of the arch-opportunist Socialist Review, edited by the semi-liberal Ramsay MacDonald).

And at a moment like this Mr. Kautsky, leader of the Second International, comes out with a book on the dictatorship of the proletariat—in other words, on the proletarian revolution—that is a hundred times more disgraceful, outrageous, and renegade than [Eduard] Bernstein's notorious *Premises of Socialism.*† Nearly twenty years have elapsed since the appearance of that renegade book, and now there appears a repetition of this renegacy in an even grosser form by Kautsky!

Only a small part of the book deals with the Russian Bolshevik Revolution as such. Kautsky repeats every one of the Mensheviks' pearls of wisdom, so that the Russian worker may split his sides with laughter. Just imagine, for example, what goes by the name of "Marxism": the argument—peppered with quotations from the semi-liberal works of the semi-liberal Maslov—that the rich peasants are trying to corner the land (how novel!), that they find high grain prices very profitable, and so on. Then our "Marxist" makes the following contemptuous, and out-and-out liberal, statement: "The poor peasant is declared here"

<sup>\*</sup> See pages 347-436 in this volume.—Ed.

<sup>†</sup> Published in the United States under title Evolutionary Socialism .- Ed.

(that is, by the Bolsheviks in the Soviet Republic) "to be a permanent and wholesome product of the socialist agrarian reform under the 'dictatorship of the proletariat'" (p. 48 of Kautsky's pamphlet).

Splendid, is it not? Here is a Socialist, a Marxist, who tries to prove to us the bourgeois character of the revolution, and who at the same time scoffs at the organisation of the poor peasants, quite in the spirit of Maslov, Potressov and the Cadets.

"The expropriation of the rich peasants only introduces a new element of unrest and civil war into the process of production, which stands in urgent need of tranquillity and security for its recovery" (page 49).

It is incredible, but a fact. That was literally said not by Savinkov, not by Milyukov, but by Kautsky!

We in Russia have seen so many cases of "Marxism" being used as a screen by defenders of the kulaks that Kautsky no longer surprises us. For the benefit of the European reader, it may perhaps be necessary to dwell in greater detail on this despicable kowtowing to the bourgeoisie and the liberal fear of civil war. But for the Russian worker and peasant it is enough to point one's finger at Kautsky's renegacy—and pass on.

Nearly nine-tenths of Kautsky's book is devoted to a general theoretical question of the utmost importance, the question, namely, of the relation between the dictatorship of the proletariat and "democracy." And it is here that Kautsky's complete break with Marxism stands out in clearest relief.

Kautsky assures his reader—with a perfectly serious and extremely "learned" air—that what Marx meant by the "revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat" was not a "form of governing" which precludes democracy, but a condition, namely, "a condition of rule." And the rule of the proletariat, as the majority of the population, is possible even with the strictest observance of democracy—the Paris Commune, for example, which was in fact a dictatorship of the proletariat, was elected by universal suffrage. That Marx, when he spoke of the dictatorship of the proletariat, did not have in mind a "form of governing [or a form of government, Regierungsform] is proved by the fact that he, Marx, was of the opinion that in England and America the transition [to communism] might take place peacefully, i.e., in a democratic way" (pages 20-21).

It is incredible, but a fact! That is just the way Kautsky argues; and he fulminates against the Bolsheviks for violating "democracy" in their Constitution and in their entire policy, and with all his might and on every pretext preaches "the democratic, not the dictatorial method."

This is a complete desertion to the camp of the opportunists (of the type of David, Kolb and other pillars of German social-chauvinism, or of the English Fabians and Independents, or of the French and Italian reformists), who declared more frankly and honestly that they did not accept Marx's doctrine of the dictatorship of the proletariat on the grounds that it ran counter to democracy.

It is a complete reversion to the views of the pre-Marxian German Socialists, who claimed that they were out for a "free people's state," to the views of the petty-bourgeois democrats, who did not understand that *every* state is a machine for the suppression of one class by another.

It is a complete renunciation of the proletarian revolution, for which is substituted the liberal theory of "winning a majority," and of "utilising democracy"! Everything Marx and Engels preached for forty years, from 1852 to 1891, demonstrating the necessity for the proletariat to "smash" the bourgeois state machine, has been completely forgotten, distorted, and thrown overboard by Kautsky the renegade. To analyse Kautsky's theoretical mistakes in detail would mean

To analyse Kautsky's theoretical mistakes in detail would mean repeating what I have said in *State and Revolution*. There is no need for that here. I will only say briefly:

Kautsky has renounced Marxism, for he has forgotten that every state is a machine for the suppression of one class by another, and that the most democratic bourgeois republic is a machine for the oppression of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie.

The proletariat dictatorship, the proletarian state, which is a machine for the suppression of the bourgeoisie by the proletariat, is not a "form of governing," but a state of a different type. This suppression is necessary because the bourgeoisie will always furiously resist its expropriation.

(The argument that Marx in the 'seventies granted the possibility of a peaceful transition to socialism in England and America is the argument of a sophist, or, to put it bluntly, of a swindler who juggles with quotations and references. First, Marx regarded this possibility as an exception even then. Secondly, in those days monopoly

capitalism, i.e., imperialism, did not yet exist. Thirdly, in England and America there was no military then—as there is now—serving as the chief apparatus of the bourgeois state machine.)

Where there is suppression, you cannot have liberty, equality, and the rest. That is why Engels said: "So long as the proletariat still uses the state, it does not use it in the interests of freedom but in order to hold down its adversaries, and as soon as it becomes possible to speak of freedom the state as such ceases to exist." 10

Bourgeois democracy, whose value in the education of the proletariat and in training it for the struggle is undeniable, is always narrow, hypocritical, spurious, and false; it always remains democracy for the rich and a swindle for the poor.

Proletarian democracy suppresses the exploiters, the bourgeoisie—and therefore does not play the hypocrite, does not promise them freedom and democracy—and confers genuine democracy on the working people. Soviet Russia is the only country that has conferred on the proletariat, and on the whole gigantic labouring majority of Russia, a freedom and democracy unprecedented, impossible, and inconceivable in any bourgeois democratic republic, by, for example, taking away the palaces and mansions from the bourgeoisie (without which the right of assembly is sheer hypocrisy), by taking away the printshops and stocks of paper from the capitalists (without which freedom of the press for the labouring majority of the nation is a lie), and by replacing bourgeois parliamentarianism by the democratic organisation of the Soviets, which are a thousand times nearer to "the people" and more "democratic" than the most democratic bourgeois parliament. And so on and so forth.

Kautsky has thrown overboard...the "class struggle" as applied to democracy! Kautsky has become a downright renegade and lackey of the bourgeoisie.

We cannot help mentioning, in passing, a few gems of his renegacy. Kautsky is obliged to admit that the Soviet form of organisation is of worldwide, and not only of Russian, significance, that it is one of the "most important phenomena of our times," that it promises to acquire "decisive significance" in the future great "battles between capital and labour." But—imitating the wisdom of the Mensheviks, who have safely gone over to the camp of the bourgeoisie against the proletariat—Kautsky "deduces" that the Soviets are all right as "organisations of struggle," but not as "organisations of state."

Magnificent! Organise in Soviets, ye proletarians and poor peasants! But God forbid that you win! Do not dare to win! The moment you win and vanquish the bourgeoisie, it will be all up with you; for you must not be "state" organisations in a proletarian state. In fact, as soon as you have won you must dissolve!

Oh, what a splendid Marxist this Kautsky is! What an inimitable "theoretician" of renegacy!

Gem No. 2. Civil war is the "mortal enemy" of "social revolution," for, as we have already heard, the latter "needs tranquillity [for the rich?] and security" [for the capitalists?].

Proletarians of Europe, don't think of revolution until you have found a bourgeoisie who will not hire Savinkov and Dan, Dutov and Krasnov, Czechoslovaks and kulaks to wage civil war on you!

Marx wrote in 1870 that the chief hope lay in the fact that the war had given the French workers training in arms. What Kautsky the "Marxist" expects of four years of war is not the use of arms by the workers against the bourgeoisie (God forbid, that would scarcely be "democratic"!), but...the conclusion of a nice little peace by the nice little capitalists!

Gem No. 3. Civil war has one other unpleasant side to it: whereas "democracy" provides for the "protection of the minority" (as—be it said in parenthesis—the French defenders of Dreyfus, and people like Liebknecht, McLean or Debs in more recent times know so very well from their own experience), civil war (mark that!) "threatens the vanquished with complete annihilation."

Well, isn't this Kautsky a tip-top revolutionary? He is for revolution heart and soul...provided there is no serious struggle that might threaten annihilation! He has completely "overcome" the old errors of old Engels, who so enthusiastically lauded the educational value of violent revolutions. Like the "serious" historian he is, he has completely renounced the delusions of those who said that civil war steels the exploited and teaches them how to build a new society without exploiters.

Gem No. 4. Viewed historically, was the dictatorship of the proletarians and petty bourgeois in the revolution of 1789 great and beneficial? Certainly not. For along came Napoleon. "The dictatorship of the lower strata paves the way for the dictatorship of the sword" (page 26). Like all the liberals, to whose camp he has deserted, our "serious" historian is firmly convinced that in countries which have not known the "dictatorship of the lower strata"—Germany, for example—there has never been a dictatorship of the sword. Germany has never been distinguished from France by a grosser and more vile dictatorship of the sword—that is all a calumny invented by Marx and Engels, who brazenly lied when they said that so far there has been a greater love of freedom and a greater pride of the oppressed among the "people" in France than in England or Germany, and that it was precisely her revolutions that France has to thank for this.

But enough! One would have to write a whole pamphlet to enumerate the gems of renegacy of that despicable renegade Kautsky.

We cannot refrain from saying a word or two about Mr. Kautsky's "internationalism." He inadvertently cast a lurid light upon it himself by portraying in the most sympathetic terms the internationalism of the Mensheviks, who, the sugary Kautsky assures us, were also Zimmerwaldians and, if you please, "brothers" of the Bolsheviks!

Here is his sugary picture of the "Zimmerwaldism" of the Mensheviks:

"The Mensheviks wanted universal peace. They wanted all the belligerents to declare in favour of no annexations or indemnities. Until this had been achieved, the Russian army, in their opinion, should maintain itself in a state of fighting readiness." ... But the wretched Bolsheviks "disorganised" the army and concluded the wretched Peace of Brest-Litovsk.... And Kautsky says as clear as can be that the Constituent Assembly should have been preserved, and the Bolsheviks should not have taken power.

Thus we find that internationalism means supporting one's "own" imperialist government, as the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries supported Kerensky; that it means helping it to conceal the secret treaties, hoodwinking the people with sugary phrases, such as "demanding" of the savage beasts that they be tame, "demanding" of the imperialist governments that they "declare in favour of no annexations or indemnities."

That, in Kautsky's opinion, is internationalism.

In our opinion it is sheer renegacy.

Internationalism means breaking with one's own social-chauvinists (i.e., defencists) and with one's own imperialist government; it means waging a revolutionary struggle against that government and overthrowing it, and a readiness to agree to the gravest national sacrifices

(even to a Brest-Litovsk Peace), if it should be of benefit to the development of the international workers' revolution.

We all know very well that Kautsky and his friends (Ströbel, Bernstein, and the rest) were deeply "outraged" by the Brest-Litovsk Peace: they would have had us make a "gesture"...that would at once have turned over the power in Russia to the bourgeoisie! These thick-skulled but good and unctuous German petty bourgeois were not interested in the proletarian Soviet Republic—the first in the world to overthrow its imperialism by revolutionary means-maintaining itself until the revolution took place in Europe, fanning the flames of the conflagration in other countries (the petty bourgeois dread a conflagration in Europe, they dread civil war, which would disturb "tranquillity and security"). No, what they were interested in was that the petty-bourgeois nationalism which calls itself "internationalism," because of its "moderation and punctiliousness," should maintain itself in all countries. If only the Russian Republic had remained bourgeois and ... had waited ... then everybody on earth would have been a nice, moderate petty-bourgeois nationalist without any propensities for conquest-and that, in fact, would have been internationalism! That is the line of thought of the Kautskians in Germany, the

That is the line of thought of the Kautskians in Germany, the Longuetists in France, the Independents (I.L.P.) in England, Turati and his "brethren" in renegacy in Italy, and so on and so forth.

By now only an utter idiot can fail to see that we were not only right in overthrowing our bourgeoisie (and its lackeys, the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries), but were also right in concluding the Brest-Litovsk Peace after our open appeal for universal peace, backed by the publication and annulment of the secret treaties, had been rejected by the bourgeoisie of the Entente. Firstly, if we had not concluded the Brest-Litovsk Peace, we would at once have surrendered the power to the Russian bourgeoisie and thus have done untold damage to the world socialist revolution. Secondly, at the price of national sacrifices, we preserved such an international revolutionary influence that today we have Bulgaria directly imitating us, Austria and Germany in a state of ferment, both imperialist systems weakened, while we have grown stronger and have begun to create a real proletarian army.

From the tactics of the renegade Kautsky it follows that the German workers should now defend the fatherland in conjunction with the bourgeoisie and should fear a German revolution like the plague,

for the British might impose a new edition of the Brest-Litovsk Peace on it. What is that but renegacy? What is that but petty-bourgeois nationalism?

We, on the other hand, say that while the loss of the Ukraine was a grave national sacrifice, it helped to steel and strengthen the proletarians and poor peasants of the Ukraine as revolutionary fighters for the international workers' revolution. Ukraine suffered—but the international revolution gained, for the German army was "corrupted," German imperialism weakened, and the German, Ukrainian, and Russian worker revolutionaries were drawn closer together.

It would of course be "nicer" if we could overthrow both Wilhelm and Wilson simply by a war. But that is utter nonsense. We cannot overthrow them by a foreign war. But we can hasten their internal disintegration. We have achieved that on an immense scale by the Soviet, proletarian revolution.

The German workers would do it even more successfully if they went out for revolution *heedless* of national sacrifices (that alone is internationalism), if they said (and backed their word by *deeds*) that they prize the interests of the international workers' revolution *higher* than the integrity, security and tranquillity of any national state, and of their own in particular.

Europe's greatest misfortune and danger is that it has no revolutionary party. It has parties of traitors like the Scheidemanns, Renaudels, Hendersons, Webbs and Co., or of servile souls, like Kautsky. But it has no revolutionary party. Of course, the mighty revolutionary movement of the masses may rectify this deficiency; but it is nevertheless a serious misfortune and a grave danger.

That is why we must do our utmost to expose renegades like Kautsky, thereby supporting the revolutionary groups of genuine internationalist proletarians, which are to be found in all countries. The proletariat will very soon turn away from the traitors and renegades and will follow these groups, drawing and training leaders from their midst. Not without good reason are the bourgeoisie of all countries howling about "world Bolshevism."

World Bolshevism will vanquish the world bourgeoisie.

October 9, 1918.

### THE CAPTURE OF SAMARA

SAMARA is ours. The Volga is free. It would be criminal not to take advantage of the few days left before navigation closes. Every effort must be bent to ship out the maximum oil and food to the upper reaches of the Volga. This cannot be done without the strictest centralisation of all measures and the meticulous execution in the localities of orders from the centre. In view of this, the Council of People's Commissars resolves and prescribes the following for unqualified execution:

- 1. All craft and other means of transport previously taken over by various organisations shall be immediately returned to the Water Transport Board or the Chief Oil Committee, as the case may be. (This measure does not extend to ships and other craft already incorporated in the Volga Naval Flotilla.)
- 2. The right formerly conferred on various organisations, institutions, and individuals to requisition ships and other craft on the Volga is hereby abolished. Henceforward, the requisitioning of vessels for military purposes shall be effected only with the sanction of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic in each particular instance.
- 3. All commanders of fronts and all Extraordinary Commissions and Soviets are hereby ordered to take strict and immediate measures to ensure the unimpeded navigation of vessels and the safeguarding of cargoes against seizure or delay in transit.
- 4. The entire Volga oil fleet and all oil cargoes on the Volga shall be under the exclusive control of the Chief Oil Committee (telegraphic address: Glavkoneft, Moscow). All authorities, not excluding military authorities and commanders of fronts, are hereby instructed unreservedly to obey all orders of the Chief Oil Committee relative to the

movement of oil cargoes, and all orders of the Water Transport Board relative to vessels.

- 5. Authority over oil cargoes along the entire Volga shall be vested personally in Comrade Tarvid, Member of the Board of the Chief Oil Committee. All orders relative to oil issued by him or his authorised agents shall be absolutely binding on all authorities.
- 6. All existing decisions relative to the requisitioning, prohibition of consignment, etc., of oil shall remain in force only provided they do not run counter to the orders of the Chief Oil Committee.
- 7. Strictly confirming the aforesaid, the Council of People's Commissars has resolved to commit for trial by Revolutionary Military Tribunal all persons guilty of infringement of the present decree, irrespective of position or party affiliation. The agents of the Chief Oil Committee, the Water Transport Board and the Food Commissariat in the localities are hereby instructed to report forthwith to Moscow all actions of local authorities interfering with the systematic work of the central bodies. Extraordinary Commissions will be dispatched immediately to pass and enforce judgment on the culprits.
- 8. This decree of the Council of People's Commissars shall be brought to the attention of all executive organs and official persons in the localities.

Telegram.

Izvestia, No. 223, October 13, 1918.

# PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION OF "POLITICAL PARTIES IN RUSSIA AND THE TASKS OF THE PROLETARIAT" \*

THIS pamphlet was written at the beginning of April 1917, prior to the formation of the Coalition Cabinet. Much water has flowed under the bridges since then, but the chief features of the principal political parties have been manifested and confirmed in all the subsequent stages of the revolution: at the time of the "Coalition Cabinet" formed on May 6, 1917, at the time of the union of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries against the Bolsheviks in June (and July) 1917, at the time of the Kornilov events, at the time of the Revolution of October 1917 and subsequent to it.

That the description given of the chief parties and of their class bases was correct has been borne out by the whole course of the Russian Revolution. And the spread of revolution in Western Europe today is showing that there, too, the basic relations between the chief parties are the same. The role of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries is being filled by the social-chauvinists (socialists in word, chauvinists in deeds) in all countries, as well as by the Kautskians in Germany, the Longuetists in France, etc.

Moscow, October 22, 1918.

Published in the pamphlet Political Parties in Russia and the Tasks of the Proletariat.

• For article, see V. I. Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. XX, Book I, (International Publishers, N. Y.), p. 158.—Ed.

### THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

COMRADES, it seems to me that our present situation, for all its contradictions, might be expressed by saying, firstly, that never before have we been so near to an international proletarian revolution, and, secondly, that never have we been in such a perilous situation as we are now. It is on these two propositions, especially the second, that I would like to dwell today. I think that the broad masses scarcely realise the full danger with which we are menaced, and as we can only act with the support of the broad masses, the chief task of the representatives of Soviet government is to bring home to the masses the full truth of the present situation, however difficult it may sometimes be. As to our being near to an international socialist revolution, that has been spoken about time and again, and I will be brief. For, as we know, one of the chief reproaches levelled at the Soviet government both by the bourgeoisie and by the petty bourgeois who have lost faith in socialism, as well as by many so-called "Socialists" who are accustomed to times of peace and never did believe in socialismthe reproach they all levelled at the Soviet government was that simultaneously with the socialist revolution of the working class in Russia, we were starting a revolution in the West, and doing it at a venture.

Comrades, today, when in this fifth year of the war the universal collapse of imperialism gives the direct lie to this reproach, and when the traitor Socialists can see for themselves that this reproach is unfounded, it is becoming obvious that, quite apart from the successes we have achieved and won in Russia, we have in this year of revolution done more than any proletarian party in the world has ever done before. We are successfully furthering the revolution, which it was thought could not exist more than three weeks, or six at the most, and our revolution has become a worldwide phenomenon. That the

Bolsheviks are a worldwide phenomenon is admitted by the entire bourgeoisie, and this admission shows that our revolution has spread from the East to the West and is therefore finding a more and more favourable soil. You know that revolution has flared up in Bulgaria. The Bulgarian soldiers have begun to form Soviets. And now news keeps arriving every day about what is happening in Serbia. In spite of the fact that the Entente Powers are in control in Serbia, there we find just such a revolution as ours, with the formation of a Soviet form of government and of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies.

We know that the Caucasus has fallen away completely; but although the Anglo-French Entente is promising the peoples endless blessings if they rise in revolt and break with Germany, although the capitalists of America, Britain and France, the richest and most powerful in the world, are so lavish with their promises, it is becoming obvious that the bourgeoisie of the various small countries on which Britain is now relying cannot maintain itself under any circumstances, that its rule, its power, in these countries will be short-lived and transitory, for the workers' revolution is everywhere knocking at the gate.

The bourgeoisie of several countries know that they can maintain power in their states only with the help of foreign bayonets. And we find that revolution has begun not only in Austria, but even in Germany, whose position so very recently seemed so stable. We are receiving news from there that the German press is already talking about the abdication of the Kaiser and about an independent democratic party. The press has already received permission from the Chancellor to talk about a German republic-that means something. We know that disintegration is spreading among the troops and that direct appeals for a mutiny of the army are being circulated. We know that Revolutionary Military Committees have been set up in Eastern Germany and that they are issuing revolutionary publications which are revolutionising the soldiers. It may therefore be quite definitely said that the revolution is ripening with every day and every hour. And it is not only we who are saying that; it is being said by all the Germans in the war party and among the bourgeoisie, who feel that the ministers are tottering, that the people do not trust them, and that they and their government cannot hold on much longer. That is what everybody acquainted with the state of affairs is saying,

so inevitable has a popular revolution, and perhaps even a proletarian revolution, become in Germany.

We know very well what an immense proletarian movement has sprung up in other countries as well. We saw how Gompers went to Italy and, with the money of the Entente Powers and the help of all the Italian bourgeois and social-patriots, toured every town in Italy, calling upon the Italian workers to carry on the imperialist war. We saw how at the time the Italian Socialist press published notices about him in which all that was left was the name of Gompers, everything else having been deleted by the censor; or articles which jeered: "Gompers is banqueting and tongue-wagging." And the bourgois press admitted that Gompers was hissed everywhere. The bourgeois press wrote: "The Italian workers are behaving as if they would allow only Lenin and Trotsky to tour Italy." During the war the Italian Socialist Party has made tremendous strides forward, that is, Leftward.

We know that in France there were too many patriots among the workers: they were told that Paris and French territory generally were in grave danger. Yet, at the last congress, when a letter was read recounting what the Allies, the British and French imperialists, were doing, there were cries of "Hurrah for the Socialist Republic!" And yesterday news was received that a meeting was held in Paris attended by two thousand metal workers which hailed the Soviet Republic in Russia.

We find that of the three Socialist parties in Great Britain, only one, the Independent Socialist Party, is not coming out openly as an ally of the Bolsheviks, whereas the socialist labour parties in Scotland definitely proclaim their support of the Bolsheviks. Bolshevism is beginning to spread in Great Britain too. And the Spanish parties, which formerly sided with Anglo-French imperialism and in which on the outbreak of the war only one or two men were to be found who had even a remote conception of what the internationalists were, all these parties are hailing the Russian Bolsheviks at their congresses.

Bolshevism has become the worldwide theory and tactics of the international proletariat! The whole world witnessed the clear-cut Bolshevik socialist revolution, and the debates among the various peoples are actually on the basis of whether one is *for* or *against* the Bolsheviks. What Bolshevism has done is that the creation of a prole-

tarian state is being put forward as a program. Workers who had no idea of what was going on in Russia, because they only read the bourgeois papers which were chock full of lies and calumnies, began to realise what was going on when they saw the proletarian government winning one victory after another over its counter-revolutionaries at home, when they saw that the only way of salvation from this war lies in our tactics, in the revolutionary mode of action of our workers' government. And when last Wednesday there was a demonstration in Berlin, and the workers expressed their disgust with the Kaiser by trying to march past his palace, they then proceeded to the Russian Embassy, desiring to express their solidarity with the actions of the Russian government.

That is what Europe has come to in this fifth year of war! And that is why we say that never have we been so near to a world revolution, never has it been so obvious that the Russian proletariat has established its might, or so clear that millions and millions of the world proletariat will follow in our footsteps. That is why, I repeat, never have we been so near to a world revolution, and never has our situation been so perilous as it is now; for never before has Bolshevism been looked upon as a world force. It would seem that it is only a result of the fatigue of the Russian soldiers, an outburst of discontentment on the part of the war-weary Russian soldiers; that as soon as this discontent would pass and peace was established, even a peace of the most coercive character, all steps towards building a new state and towards socialist reforms would be crushed. All were certain of that, but it turned out that as soon as we passed from the imperialist war, which ended in a most coercive peace, to the first steps in building a new state, as soon as we were able to give the peasants the real opportunity of living without landlords and establishing relations disadvantageous to the landlords, and to convince themselves in practice that they are building their lives on the expropriated land, not in the interests of the kulaks and not in the interests of new capitalists, but really in the interests of the labouring people themselves; as soon as the workers saw that they had obtained the opportunity to build their life without capitalists and to learn that difficult but great business without which they will never escape from exploitation—it became obvious to all, and was shown in practice, that no force, no counter-revolution can overthrow the Soviet government. Months were required before we in Russia arrived at this conviction. It is said that in the countryside it was only in the summer of 1918, only towards this autumn, that the peasants came to realise the meaning and significance of our revolution. In the cities this was realised long ago, but in order that it might reach every district, every remote rural area and village, in order that the peasant might understand-not from books or speeches, but from his own experience-that the land should be turned over to those who work it, and not to the kulak, and that the kulak has to be combated, that he has to be vanquished by organisation, that the revolts which swept over the country this summer were supported by the landlords, kulaks and White Guards; in order that he might learn from his own bitter experience, at his own cost, what the rule of the Constituent Assembly meant, many a long month was required. And now, after all these months, the countryside is emerging steeled and tempered, and the mass of the poor peasants, who do not batten on the labour of others, have only now learnt-not from books, from which the labouring masses will never derive firm convictions, but from their own experience—that Soviet government means the government of the exploited labouring people, and that now every village can proceed to lay the foundations of a new socialist Russia.

Many long months were required—and only now, towards the close of 1918, can we say with conviction, basing ourselves on the reports of people with practical experience, that in the rest of Russia, too, in every country village, however remote, the people know what Soviet government means and uphold it. For the peasants have seen what a formidable menace the capitalists and landlords are. They have also seen the difficulties of the socialist transformation, yet were not deterred, but said: "We, with our millions of hands, will join in this work; we have learnt a lot in this year, and we will learn still more."

This is what tens and scores of millions in Russia are now saying with full conviction, on the basis of their own experience. And only now is this becoming clear to the West-European bourgeoisie as well. Until now it did not take the Bolsheviks seriously, did not realise that the only stable form of state has been set up here, a state which works hand in hand with the labouring masses and is able to rouse them to real heroism and self-sacrifice. And when this proletarian state began to infect Europe, it turned out that this was by no means something peculiar to Russia alone, and that four years of war had started a process of disintegration in the armies all over the world—whereas

before it was said that only Russia, owing to her backwardness and inefficiency, had reached such a stage that in the fourth year of war her army broke up and fell to pieces; and that this could never happen in civilised, parliamentary countries. Now, however, everybody can see that after four years of the World War, when millions have been slaughtered and crippled for the profit of the capitalists, and when there are tens of thousands of deserters, this extraordinary spectacle is to be observed not only in Russia and in Austria, but even in Germany, which boasts of her good order. When that happened, the world bourgeoisie realised that it had to contend with a more serious enemy, and it began to muster its forces; and the nearer we approached to international proletarian revolution, the more the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie mustered its forces.

In some countries people are still shrugging their shoulders at revolution, just as in October the coalition ministers shrugged their shoulders at the Bolsheviks and said that Russia would never fall under Bolshevik rule. In France, for example, they say that the Bolsheviks are a gang of traitors who are selling their nation to the Germans. The French bourgeois are more to be excused for saying that than are the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, for it is only to be expected that the bourgeois will spend millions on fabricating lies. But when the French bourgeoisie saw Bolshevism developing in France and even parties which were not revolutionary supporting the Bolsheviks with revolutionary slogans, the French Republic perceived that it was confronted with a more formidable enemy—the collapse of imperialism and the superiority of the workers in the revolutionary struggle.

Everybody knows that the danger to the proletarian revolution is particularly great just now owing to the imperialist war, because the proletarian revolution is developing unevenly in the various countries, since the conditions of political life differ in different countries. The proletariat is too weak in one country and is stronger in another; whereas in one country the upper stratum of the proletariat is weak, in other countries it may happen that the bourgeoisie is not only able for a time to split the ranks of the workers, but to exclude them from power, as was the case in Great Britain and France. That is why the proletarian revolution is developing unevenly, and that is why the bourgeoisie recognised that its most powerful enemy is the revolutionary proletariat. It is mustering its forces to withstand the collapse of world imperialism.

Now our situation has changed and events are developing with lightning speed. At first there were two groups of imperialist marauders, who tried to annihilate each other; but now these groups see -especially from the example of German imperialism, which until recently considered itself the match of England and France-that their chief enemy is the revolutionary proletariat. Now, when Germany is being disintegrated by the revolutionary movement, the British and French imperialists consider themselves the masters of the world. They are convinced that their chief enemy is the Bolsheviks and the world revolution. The more the revolution develops, the more the bourgeoisie musters its forces. That is why some of us, and many especially among the broad masses, having grown convinced that they can vanquish our counter-revolutionaries—the Cossacks, officers and Czechoslovaks-think that that settles everything and they do not realise that now this is not enough for us, that there is a new enemy, a far more formidable one: British and French imperialism. So far this enemy has not had very much success in Russia, as, for example, in the case of the landing in Archangel. A French writer, who publishes a newspaper called Victory [Victoire],\* said that victory over the Germans was not enough for France, that she also needed a victory over Bolshevism, and that the campaign against Russia was not an attack on Germany, but a campaign against the Bolshevik revolutionary proletariat and against the contagion that is spreading all over the world.

That is why we are now being confronted with a new danger, a danger which has not yet fully developed and is not yet altogether fully apparent, a danger which the British and French imperialists are plotting surreptitiously and which we must clearly realise so as to open the eyes of the masses to it through their leaders. For although it is true the British and French have not achieved any great success in Siberia or in Archangel, but on the contrary have suffered a number of reverses, they are now directing their efforts for an attack on Russia from the South, either through the Dardanelles and the Black Sea, or else overland, through Bulgaria and Rumania. As these people are keeping their moves a military secret, we cannot say how far advanced the preparations for this campaign are, and which of these two plans, if not some other, has been selected; that is what makes

A Paris daily founded in 1914 by Gustave Hervé, a Socialist and anti-militarist who became a rabid chauvinist.—Ed.

it so dangerous, the fact that we cannot know for certain. But we do know for certain that these preparations are being made, for the press of these countries is not always very cautious, and now and again some journalist openly announces the chief aims, and discards all the false talk about a league of nations.

Among the German ruling circles, we now clearly perceive two tendencies, two plans of salvation—if salvation is still possible. Some say: Let us play for time and carry on somehow until the spring, and perhaps we may yet be able to put up military resistance along the fortified line; others talk about the German bourgeoisie, about the German Kaiser, and say that their chief hope of salvation lies in England and France. Others still turn all their attention to trying to reach an agreement with England and France against the Bolsheviks; all their attention is centred on this, and while it is true that Wilson now replies to overtures of peace with a blunt and contemptuous refusal, this is scarcely enough to enduce the party of the German capitalists who are seeking agreement with England to renounce their plans. It knows that agreements are sometimes reached tacitly, that if it is of service to the British and French capitalists against the Bolsheviks such services may be rewarded in capitalist society; services are sometimes paid for. "Perhaps we can help the British and French capitalists grab something, and then they will leave a portion of the spoils for us." Such are the ethics and rules of the capitalist world, and it seems to me that in laying claim to a certain share of British and French capital, these people know what they are about and are right in their calculations—and they are counting on billions, no less. Some of these gentlemen are smart at such calculations.

The British and French capitalists, as it were, say: "We will get to the Ukraine, occupy it and plunder it; but you, German gentlemen, hold on to it until we come. You must evacuate a part of the Ukraine. Then our French army of occupation will begin to act differently and seize the whole of the Ukraine." That is the way they reason, for they understand that the national bourgeoisie of all the occupied countries—Finland, the Ukraine, Poland—know that they cannot hold on for a single day if the German army of occupation withdraws. And that is why the bourgeoisie of these countries, which yesterday sold themselves to the Germans, went to pay their respects to the German imperialists and concluded an alliance with them

against their own workers, just as the Mensheviks did in the Ukraine and the Socialist-Revolutionaries in Tiflis—that is why they are now ready to sell their country to anybody. Yesterday they sold it to the Germans; today they are selling it to the British and French. That is the sort of huckstering going on behind the scenes. Seeing that the British and French bourgeoisie are winning, they are all going over to them and are preparing to make a deal with British and French imperialism against us and at our expense.

When they tell their future Anglo-French billionaire master that they are about to side with him, they say: "Your Excellency will defeat the Bolsheviks, and then you must help us, because the Germans cannot save us." It is a conspiracy of the bourgeoisie of all countries against the revolutionary workers and the Bolsheviks, whom just now they hate more than anything else. The cares of all the big international imperialists are centred on us. All this is done openly, in the light of day, but the broad mass of the Russian workers and peasants cannot know it. It is our direct duty not to overlook this danger and to realise that the situation now is particularly difficult.

I will take the Ukraine as an example. Just stop and think for a moment of its position and what the workers and intelligent Communists must do in the present situation. On the one hand they see the indignation against the German imperialists, against the frightful plunder of the Ukraine; and on the other they see that a part of the German troops, perhaps even the greater part, have been withdrawn. Perhaps it occurs to them to find a vent for the pent-up hatred and resentment by attacking the German imperialists at once, regardless of everything. But others say: "We are internationalists, we must look at things from the standpoint both of Russia and of Germany; even from the standpoint of Germany, we know that the government cannot hold on under any circumstances; we are firmly convinced that if a victory of the workers and peasants in the Ukraine is accompanied by the consolidation and success of the government in Russia, then socialist proletarian Ukraine will not only win but will be invincible!" Such intelligent Ukrainian Communists say: "We must be very cautious. Tomorrow we may be called upon to exert every effort and stake everything in the struggle against imperialism and the German troops. That may be so tomorrow, but it is not so today; while today we know that the troops of the German imperialists are disintegrating from within, we know that besides the troops in the

Ukraine, the troops in East Prussia and Germany are publishing revolutionary literature."...\* At the same time, our chief task is to carry on propaganda for a revolt in the Ukraine. That is so from the standpoint of the international, of the world revolution, for the chief link in this chain is Germany, as the German revolution is already ripe, and on it the success of the world revolution will most of all depend.

We shall take care that our interference is not detrimental to their revolution. One must understand the changes and growth of every revolution. In every country—we have witnessed this and been through it, and know it better than anybody else—the revolution proceeds in a way of its own, and these ways are so different that it may be delayed for a year or two. World revolution is not so smoothly constructed as to proceed in the same way everywhere, in all countries. If it were, we should have been victorious long ago. Revolution passes through various political eras. Everywhere we find the compromisers making the same efforts, the same attempts to save the people from the bourgeoisie—in conjunction with the bourgeoisie. Tsereteli and Chernov did it in our country, and the Scheidemannists are doing it in Germany; in France they are doing it in their own way. And now that the revolution is making its way into Germany, the country where the workers' movement is strongest, and which is distinguished by its organised endurance, where the workers were patient longest of all—but perhaps have accumulated more revolutionary hatred and are better able to settle scores with their enemies—interference in these events on the part of people who do not know how fast the revolution is growing may hamper those intelligent Communists who say: "My prime purpose is to make this process a conscious one." Now that the German soldier has seen that he is being driven to the shambles on the pretext that he is being sent to defend his country (we say that they are defending the German imperialists) the hour is approaching when the revolution will break forth with such force as to solve the old international problem. That is why intelligent Ukrainian Communists say that we must make every sacrifice for the victory of the international revolution, for we must know that the future is ours and must march in step with the German revolution.

Those are the difficulties I wanted to explain, using the reasoning of the Ukrainian Communists as an example. These difficulties also

<sup>\*</sup> Several lines undecipherable in the stenographic report.—Ed.

affect the position of Soviet Russia. We can now say that the international proletariat has awakened and is making immense strides; but this makes our position all the more difficult, for our yesterday's enemy is rising against us as against his chief enemy. He is now out to fight, not hostile armies, but international Bolshevism. Now that Krasnov's troops are mustering on the southern front (and we know that they have received shells from the Germans), now that we have exposed imperialism in the eyes of all the nations, the people who blamed us for the Brest-Litovsk Peace yet themselves sent Krasnov to get shells from the Germans with which to bombard the Russian workers and peasants, are getting shells from the British and French imperialists, auctioning off Russia to whichever millionaire bids most. That is why the general conviction we have formed that a change has set in is now not enough. We have our old enemies, and behind them new forces are now rallying to their aid. We know and see all that. Six months ago, in February or March, we had no army. The army was not in a position to fight. The army which had been through four years of imperialist war, without knowing what it was fighting for, but vaguely feeling that it was fighting in the interests of others, that army took to its heels, and no force on earth could stop it.

No revolution is worth anything unless it is able to defend itself; but a revolution does not learn to defend itself all at once. The revolution has awakened millions to a new life. In February and March these millions did not know why they were being sent to continue the war into which the tsars and Kerenskys had driven them, and the aim of which was exposed, by the Bolshevik government, only in December. All they knew was that it was not their war, and nearly half a year was required before a turn in the tide set in. This turn has now come; it is changing the force of the revolution. In February and March, the masses, exhausted and tormented by four years of war, abandoned everything and fled; they said there must be peace and the war was terminated. They were in no condition to consider what the war was about. If these masses have now created a new discipline in the Red Army, not the discipline of the rod and of the landlord but the discipline of the Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies; if they are now ready to make the greatest sacrifices; if a new unity has sprung up among them, it is because for the first time a new discipline, a socialist discipline, has been born in the minds of tens of millions, a Red Army has been born. It was born only when

these tens of millions of people saw from their own experience that they themselves had overthrown the landlords and capitalists, that a new life was being built, that they had begun to build it themselves, and that they would get it built if they were not prevented by foreign invasion.

When the peasants saw who their chief enemy was and began the struggle against the village kulaks, when the workers threw over the manufacturers and began to organise the factories in accordance with a proletarian national-economic plan, they perceived all the difficulty this work of reorganisation entailed, but they proved equal to the task. It took months to get things going. These months have passed, and the turn has come. The time has passed when we were impotent, and we have begun to advance with giant strides. The time has passed when we had no army and no discipline; a new discipline has been created, and new peoples are joining the army and laying down their lives by the thousands.

That means that the new discipline, the comradely alliance, has reeducated us in the struggle at the front and in the struggle in the countryside against the kulak. This turning point we are witnessing has been a difficult one, but now we feel that things are beginning to move, and that we are passing from unorganised socialism to true socialism. The chief task facing us is to fight imperialism, and this fight we must win. We make no concealment of all the difficulty and danger this fight entails. We know that the tide of feeling has changed in the Red Army; it has begun to win victories, it has begun to promote from its ranks thousands of officers who have been through training courses and thousands of others who have been through no other training than the training of war. Thus, without the least exaggeration, and fully admitting the danger, we can now say that we have an army; and this army has created a discipline and has become an efficient fighting weapon. Our Southern front is not just a front-it is a front against British and French imperialism, against the most powerful foe in the world. But we are not afraid of this foe, for we know that it will be unable to cope with its own enemy at home.

Three months ago, people used to laugh when we said there might be a revolution in Germany; they said that only half crazy Bolsheviks could believe in a German revolution. Not only the entire bourgeoisie, but the Mensheviks and Left Socialist-Revolutionaries as well, called the Bolsheviks traitors to patriotism and said that a revolution in Germany was impossible. But we knew that our help was required there, and that in order to render that help we had to sacrifice everything and consent even to the most onerous terms of peace. Only a few months ago these people were talking like that and trying to prove it to us, but in these few months Germany, from a mighty empire, has become a rotten hulk. The force which has corroded it is operating in America and England as well; today it is weak, but with every step the British and French try to take in Russia, with every step they try to take in the Ukraine, as the Germans did, this force will loom larger and larger and become even more formidable than the Spanish flu.

That is why I repeat that the chief task of every class-conscious worker now is to conceal nothing from the broad masses, who may not fully realise the acuteness of the situation, but, on the contrary, to reveal the whole truth. The workers are mature enough to be told the truth. We must vanquish not only the White Guards, but world imperialism as well. We must vanquish, and will vanquish, not only that enemy, but an enemy even more formidable. And for this we need the Red Army more than anything else. Every organisation in Soviet Russia must always give its prime attention to the army. Today, when everything is clear, the war and the strengthening of the army must take first place. We are absolutely confident that we shall cope with the counter-revolution. We know that we have the forces, but we also know that British and French imperialism is stronger than we are, and we want the labouring masses to realise this quite clearly. We say that the army must be ten times stronger, and more; we must go on strengthening discipline, and every genuine, classconscious, enlightened, and organised leader must show ten times more attention and concern for this growth of the international revolution. This growth will not be confined to the defeated countries. Revolution is now beginning in the victor countries as well. And in this growth, too, Russia has already created a powerful force. It is, as it was, our chief and complete guarantee that international socialism will triumph!

#### RESOLUTION

The revolutionary movement of the proletarian masses and the peasantry against the imperialist war has lately made immense prog-

ress in all countries, especially in the Balkans, in Austria and in Germany. But this very progress has aroused the particular fury of the international bourgeoisie, now headed by the bourgeoisie of Britain, America, and France, and has stimulated its efforts to organise with all speed into a counter-revolutionary force for the suppression of revolution, and, in the first place, of its hearth at the present time, the Soviet power in Russia.

The German bourgeoisie and the German government, defeated in the war and menaced by a powerful revolutionary movement from within, are feverishly seeking for some means of salvation. One trend among the ruling circles of Germany still hopes by procrastination to gain time until the winter and to prepare for the military defence of the country along a new fortified line. Another trend is making frantic efforts to reach an agreement with the British and French bourgeoisie against the revolutionary proletariat and the Bolsheviks. But finding the victors, the British and French imperialists, extremely unaccommodating, it is trying to frighten them with the spectre of Bolshevism and to win their good graces by helping them against the Bolsheviks, against the proletarian revolution.

The bourgeoisie of the countries subjected to, or occupied by, Germany is seeking even more zealously to reach agreement with the Entente, especially where it realises the utter impossibility of maintaining its power over the exploited labouring masses without the aid of foreign bayonets, as, for example, in Finland, the Ukraine, etc.

The effect of these conditions is to create the following peculiar situation for the Soviet state: on the one hand, never have we been so near to international proletarian revolution; on the other hand, never has our situation been so dangerous. There are no longer two groups of imperialist marauders, mutually consuming and enfeebling each other and approximately of equal strength. There now remains only one group, the group of victors, the British and French imperialists, which is preparing to divide up the whole world among the capitalists; has set itself the aim of overthrowing the Soviet regime in Russia at any cost and replacing it by a bourgeois regime, and is now preparing to attack Russia from the South, for example, through the Dardanelles and the Black Sea, or through Bulgaria and Rumania. And a section at least of the British and French imperialists apparently hope that the German government, by direct or tacit agreement with them, will withdraw its troops from the Ukraine only as the

latter is occupied by British and French troops, so as to prevent an otherwise inevitable victory of the Ukrainian workers and peasants and the creation of a Ukrainian workers' and peasants' government.

Among the broad mass of the workers and peasants, the realisation has not penetrated everywhere, nor has it penetrated to their very depths, that behind the Krasnov and White Guard counter-revolutionaries, an infinitely more dangerous force, the force of the international counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie, and of the British, American and French bourgeoisie in the first place, is preparing to attack us. We must work incessantly to bring this realisation home to the masses. The utmost attention must be paid to straightening the Southern Front and creating and arming a far more powerful Red Army than we have now. Every working class organisation, every union of poor peasants, every Soviet institution must always assign first place on its agenda to the question of strengthening the army, and again and again verify whether enough has been done, and what other measures can and should be adopted.

A distinct change of spirit has set in among our worker and peasant masses. They have overcome their extreme war-weariness. An army is being created, has already been created. A new, communist discipline has grown up, a conscious discipline, the discipline of the working people. And this fully justifies the hope and confidence that we can and will successfully uphold our socialist fatherland and the victory of the international proletarian revolution.

Report to, and resolution adopted at, the joint session of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, Moscow Soviet, factory committees and trade unions, October 22, 1918.

Published in Verbatim Report of the Fifth All-Russian Central Executive Committee, 1918.

#### THE REVOLUTION IN AUSTRIA-HUNGARY

EVENTS have shown that the sufferings of the people have not been in vain.

We are not only fighting Russian capitalism; we are fighting the capitalism of all countries, world capitalism—we are fighting for the freedom of all workers....

Difficult as it was for us to cope with famine and with our enemies, we now see that we have millions of allies.

These are the workers of Austria, Hungary, and Germany. While we are gathered here, Friedrich Adler, released from prison, is very likely on his way to Vienna. On the squares of Vienna the first day of the Austrian workers' revolution is probably being celebrated.

The time is not far off when the first day of the world revolution will be celebrated everywhere.

Our labours and sufferings have not been in vain! The world, international revolution will triumph!

Hail the international proletarian revolution!

Newspaper report of speech at a demonstration, November 3, 1918.

Pravda, No. 240, November 5, 1918.

# THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION

WE are today gathering at scores and hundreds of meetings to celebrate the anniversary of the October Revolution. To those whose participation in the working class movement is of long standing, who were connected with the rank and file of the workers in the old days, and who had close contacts with the mills and factories it will be clear that this past year has been one of genuine proletarian dictatorship. This concept was formerly a recondite book Latin, a combination of difficult words. The intellectuals sought for the explanation of this concept in learned works, which however gave them only a hazy notion of what the proletarian dictatorship meant. And the chief thing that stands to our credit during this past year is that we have translated these words from abstruse Latin into plain Russian. During this past year the working class has not been engaged in idle philosophising, but in the practical work of creating and exercising a proletarian dictatorship, despite the excited mental state of the intellectuals.

In the West, capitalism has continued to rule. But now the day of great revolutions is dawning there too. Today the West-European workers, too, are approaching the difficult period of transition from capitalism to socialism. They, like ourselves, will have to smash the old apparatus completely and build a new one.

We were unable to utilise the store of experience, knowledge, and technical training of the bourgeois intelligentsia. The bourgeoisie sneered at the Bolsheviks and said the Soviet government would scarcely hold out for a fortnight; they therefore not only shirked co-operating, but wherever they could and with every means in their power resisted the new movement, the new work of construction which was destroying the old order.

The resistance of the bourgeoisie has by no means ceased. It is growing more vindictive from day to day, and the more rapidly, the nearer the end of the old capitalist world approaches.

As a result of the growing strength of Bolshevism and the world-wide dimensions it is assuming, the international situation today is such that the Soviet Republic may be attacked by an alliance of imperialists of all shades, and then the resistance of the bourgeoisie will pass from a national to an international scale.

Germany, as you know, has expelled our Ambassador from Berlin on the pretext that our Mission in Germany was carrying on revolutionary propaganda. As if the German government did not know before that our embassy was a carrier of the revolutionary contagion. If Germany said nothing about it before, it was because she was still strong and was not afraid of us. But now, after her military collapse, she has begun to dread us. The German generals and capitalists are turning to the Allies and saying: "You may have vanquished us, but do not carry your experiments on us too far, for we are both menaced by world Bolshevism, in the fight against which we might be of service to you."

And it is quite possible that the Allied imperialists may unite with German imperialism—provided, of course, the latter still survives—for a joint campaign against Russia. That is why the danger which has surrounded us all through the past year is now becoming greater than ever. But now we are not alone. We have friends in the shape of the peoples which have already revolted and those which are about to revolt and which are making it very plain to their governments that they refuse to go on fighting for rapacious aims of conquest. But although a new and very dangerous period awaits us, we shall continue our work of socialist construction. Past experience will help us to avoid mistakes and will lend us fresh strength in our further work.

The part played by the trade unions in the building of a new apparatus has been tremendous. The working class has shown that it is capable of organising industry without intellectuals and without capitalists. Much has been done, but much still remains to be done. Comrades, continue boldly along the path you have been following, and enlist larger and larger numbers for the work! Give all workers who are connected with the masses and sincerely desire the consolidation of the new system, even though they may be unlettered, inexperienced and untaught—give them all, whether party members or not, the opportunity to work and to learn in the new proletarian state, to govern, and to create wealth.

The international proletariat will rise up, overthrow capitalism everywhere and consummate our work, which will lead to the complete victory of socialism!

Newspaper report of speech at celebration meeting of the All-Russian Central and the Moscow Trade Union Councils, November 6, 1918.

Izvestia, No. 244 (508), November 9, 1918.

# THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION

COMRADES, we are celebrating the anniversary of our revolution at a moment when events of the utmost importance are taking place in the international working class movement. It has become obvious to even the most sceptical and doubting elements of the working class that the World War will end neither by agreements nor by coercion on the part of the old government and the old ruling bourgeois class. This war is leading not only Russia but the whole world to a world proletarian revolution and to the triumph of the workers over capital. It has drenched the earth in blood, and, after the violence and outrages of German imperialism, is pursuing the same policy in the case of Anglo-French imperialism, supported by Austria and Germany.

Today, when celebrating the anniversary of the revolution, it is fitting that we cast a glance back along the path traversed by the revolution. We were obliged to begin our revolution under unusually difficult conditions, such as no other working class revolution in the world will ever have to face. It is therefore particularly important that we should endeavour to review the path we have traversed as a whole, to ascertain what we have achieved during this period, and to what extent we have prepared ourselves during the past year for the fulfilment of our chief, our true, our decisive and fundamental task. We must be one of the divisions, one of the units of the world proletarian and socialist army. We have always realised that it was not on account of any merit of the Russian proletariat, or because it was in advance of the others, that we were called upon to begin the revolution, which grew out of the worldwide struggle. On the contrary, it was only because of the peculiar weakness and backwardness of capitalism, and the peculiar pressure of military strategic circumstances, that we were obliged by the course of events to occupy a position in advance of the other divisions, and to wait until they began to

rise and move into action. We now undertake this review in order to ascertain to what extent we are prepared for the battles that will face us in our coming revolution.

And so, comrades, when we ask ourselves what we have done on a large scale during the past year, we must reply that the following has been done: from workers' control, the first rudimentary steps of the working class, and from husbanding the resources of the country, we are now directly tackling the task of creating a workers' administration of industry; from the general struggle of the peasants for land, the struggle of the peasants against the landlords, a struggle that bore a national, bourgeois, democratic character, we have now reached a stage where the proletarian and semi-proletarian elements in the countryside have emerged: those who toil and are exploited have differentiated themselves from others and have arisen to build a new life; the most oppressed section of the rural population has entered upon a life-and-death struggle with the bourgeoisie, including their own rural kulak bourgeoisie.

Furthermore, from the first steps of Soviet organisation we have now reached a stage where, as Comrade Sverdlov, in opening this Congress justly remarked, there is not a corner in Russia, however remote, where Soviet organisation has not firmly established itself and become an integral part of the Soviet constitution, which was based on the long experience gained in the struggle of the toilers and oppressed.

In place of our utter defencelessness, after the last four years' war, which has left in the breasts of the masses not only the hatred natural to oppressed people, but also revulsion, terrible fatigue and exhaustion, and which condemned the revolution to a most difficult and drastic period, during which we were defenceless against the blows of German and Austrian imperialism—in place of this defencelessness we have now a powerful Red Army. Finally, and most important of all, in place of our international isolation, from which we suffered both in October and at the beginning of the present year, we have now reached a position when our only, but firm allies, the toilers and oppressed of all countries, have at last arisen; when the leaders of the West-European proletariat, such as Liebknecht and Adler, leaders who paid with long months of imprisonment for their bold and heroic endeavours to raise their voices against the imperialist war, have been liberated because the workers' revolutions in Vienna and Berlin,

developing daily and hourly, compelled their liberation. In place of our isolation, we have now reached a position in which we are marching side by side, shoulder to shoulder with our international allies. Such are the fundamental achievements of the past year. Permit me to dwell briefly on this path, on this transitional stage.

Our slogan at first was workers' control. We declared that in spite of the promises of the Kerensky government capital was continuing to sabotage the country's industry and was reducing it to a state of ruin. We now see that this would have meant disruption; and the first and fundamental measure that is imperative for every socialist, and not only socialist, but even every labour government, is workers' control. We did not decree socialism immediately in all our industries, since socialism can take shape and consolidate itself only when the working class has learnt how to rule, and when the authority of the working class masses has been firmly established. Without that, socialism is but a pious wish. We therefore introduced workers' control, knowing that it was an inconsistent and incomplete measure, but an essential one in order that the workers themselves might undertake the grand task of building up the industry of this vast country without exploiters, and in spite of the exploiters.

Those who took a direct, or even an indirect, part in this work, those who had suffered the oppression and brutality of the old capitalist regime, learned a great deal. We know that very little has yet been achieved; we know that in this extremely backward and impoverished country, where every hindrance and obstacle was put in the way of the working class, a long time is necessary before that class can learn to manage industry. But what in our opinion is most important and most valuable is that the workers have themselves undertaken to manage, and that workers' control, which in all the main branches of industry was bound to be chaotic, disorganised, primitive, and incomplete, is now giving place to workers' management of industry on a national scale.

The position of the workers and the trade unions has changed. Their main function now is the appointment of their representatives to all management boards and central bodies and to all the new organisations which have taken over from capitalism a disrupted and deliberately sabotaged industry. They have set about this task without the assistance of those intellectuals who from the very outset deliberately used their knowledge and superior education—the result of

the store of science accumulated by mankind—to frustrate the cause of socialism, to use science, not to assist the masses in organising a social economic system without exploiters, but to put a spoke in the wheel, to hinder the workers, who had taken upon themselves the task of administration although they were least trained for it.

We can now say that the main hindrance has been smashed. It was extremely difficult, but the sabotage of all elements who gravitate towards the bourgeoisie has been broken. In spite of tremendous handicaps, the workers have succeeded in effecting this basic step, which has laid the foundation of socialism. We do not exaggerate, nor do we fear to tell the truth. Yes, it is true that from the point of view of the final aim very little has been achieved. But a great deal, a very great deal, has been done to strengthen the foundation. When we speak of socialism, we cannot say that the foundation which has been laid in the working class masses is a conscious one, in the sense that they have procured and read books or pamphlets; it is conscious in the sense that they have undertaken the performance of an extremely difficult task by their own efforts and with their own hands. They committed thousands of blunders, and themselves suffered from these blunders. But every blunder tempered and steeled them in the work of organising the administration of industry, which has now been established and placed upon a firm foundation. They did their work thoroughly. It will now no longer be done as it was then. Now, not merely the leaders and not merely the advanced workers, but the widest strata, the entire mass of workers know that they are building socialism with their own hands, that the foundation has been laid and that there is no force within the country that can prevent them from completing the work.

While great difficulties were encountered in industry, where we had to traverse a path which to many seemed long, but which was actually brief and led from workers' control to workers' management, in the more backward countryside far greater preparatory work had to be performed. Those who have studied rural life and have associated with the peasant masses in the countryside say that the October Revolution of the cities became a real October Revolution in the countryside only in the summer and autumn of 1918. When the Petrograd proletariat and the soldiers of the Petrograd garrison took over power, they fully realised that our constructive work would encounter greater difficulties in the countryside; that here one must

proceed more gradually; that to attempt to introduce common cultivation of the land by decrees and legislation would be the height of folly; that an insignificant number of enlightened peasants might agree to this, but that the vast majority of the peasants had no such object in view. We therefore confined ourselves to that which was absolutely essential in the interests of the development of the revolution—in no case to endeavour to outrun the development of the masses, but to wait until, as a result of their own experience and their own struggles, a progressive movement grew up.

In October we confined ourselves to sweeping away forthwith the ancient enemy of the peasants, the feudal landlord, the latifundist. That was the struggle of the peasantry as a whole. There was no division as yet within the peasantry as between proletariat, semi-proletariat, the poorest section of the peasantry, and bourgeoisie. We Socialists knew that socialism was impossible without that struggle. But we also knew that our knowledge in itself was not enough; that it was essential that this knowledge should reach the millions, and not by means of propaganda, but as a result of the experience gained by the millions themselves. Therefore, since the peasants as a whole could only conceive the revolution on the basis of equal land tenure, we openly declared in our decree of October 26 [November 8], 1917, that we would adopt the peasants' Instructions on the Land Question as a basis.\*

We frankly declared that these Instructions did not correspond with our views, that this was not communism; but that we did not intend to impose merely what conformed to our program but did not conform to their views. We declared that we would march with them as with comrades in labour, confident that the progress of the revolution would lead them to the position at which we had arrived ourselves. As a result, we have the peasant movement. The agrarian reform began with the socialisation of the land, which we ourselves helped to carry by our votes while openly declaring that it did not correspond to our views, knowing that the vast majority held the idea of equal land tenure. We did not desire to force anything upon them, and preferred to wait until the peasants themselves outlived this view and were ready to advance farther. We waited and were able to muster our forces.

<sup>\*</sup> See V. I. Lenin, "Report on the Land Question," Selected Works, Vol. VI (International Publishers, N. Y.).—Ed.

The law we then adopted was based on general democratic principles, on that which united the rich kulak muzhik with the poor muzhik-hatred of the landlord. It was based on the general idea of equality, which was undoubtedly a revolutionary idea directed against the old monarchical order. From that law we had to proceed to differentiate the peasants. The law on the socialisation of the land met with general approval. It was adopted unanimously both by us and by those who did not share the views of the Bolsheviks. We left it primarily to the agricultural communes to decide who should possess the land. We left the road open for the development of agriculture along socialist lines, fully realising that agriculture then, in October 1917, was unable to take that road. As a result of our preparatory work, a step of vast, world-historic significance was achieved, without parallel even in the most democratic republican states. That step was taken by the masses this summer even in the most remote Russian villages.

When matters reached the stage of food difficulties and famine, when, as a result of our old heritage and of the four accursed years of war, of counter-revolution and civil war, we were deprived of the richest of our grain regions; when all this reached a climax and the cities were menaced with famine, then the sole faithful and reliable support of our government, the advanced workers of the cities and the industrial regions, began a united movement into the villages. It is a sheer slander to say that the workers set out to provoke armed conflict between the workers and the peasants. Events have refuted that slander. They set out to repulse the exploiting elements of the countryside, the kulaks, who had amassed untold wealth by profiteering in grain at a time when the people were dying of hunger. They set out to aid the poor labouring peasants, who constitute the majority of the rural population. That they did not go in vain, that they extended the hand of alliance, that their preparatory work was taken up by the masses—this was fully proved in July, by the July crisis, when kulak revolts flared up all over Russia. The July crisis ended with the toiling and exploited elements in the countryside rising up everywhere, rising in alliance with the proletariat of the towns. Today, Comrade Zinoviev informed me over the telephone that the number of people attending the Petrograd Regional Congress of the Committees of Poor Peasants has reached eighteen thousand, and that a most unusual spirit of enthusiasm and animation prevails.

That which is taking place all over Russia is assuming more definite shape; so that when the poor peasants rose, they saw from their own experience what the struggle against the kulaks meant. They saw that in order to keep the cities supplied with food, and in order to re-establish exchange of goods, without which the village cannot exist, they must not join forces with the rural bourgeoisie and the kulaks. They saw that they must organise separately. And we have now taken the first big step towards the socialist revolution in the countryside. In October that was impossible. We grasped the moment when the masses could be approached, and we have now reached a point where the socialist revolution in the countryside has begun, where every village, however remote, understands that neighbour rich peasant and neighbour kulak, by profiteering in grain, are regarding events from the old backwood village point of view.

And only now will rural husbandry, the rural poor, rallying around their leaders, the workers of the cities, provide a stable foundation for real socialist construction. Only now will socialist construction begin in the countryside. Only now are Soviets and farms being formed that are systematically striving for the common cultivation of the soil on a large scale, for the application of knowledge, science, and machinery, which in the old, ignorant, and reactionary times were unable to create even the most simple and elementary human culture. The work to be performed here is even more difficult than in the case of industry. Even greater mistakes are being here committed by our local committees and Soviets. But they are learning from their mistakes. We are not afraid of mistakes when they are committed by people who regard constructive effort in an enlightened manner, for we rely only on our own experience and on the work of our own hands.

And now the tremendous upheaval that in so short a time has led us to socialism in the countryside is showing that this fight has been crowned with success. The Red Army is the most striking proof of that. You know the situation we were in at the time of the world imperialist war, when conditions in Russia rendered the lot of the masses intolerable. You know that at that time we were in a state of utter helplessness. We frankly told the working class masses the whole truth. We exposed the secret imperialist treaties, the fruits of a policy which serves as a vast instrument of deception, and which now in America, the most advanced of the bourgeois imperialist democratic

republics, is deceiving and fooling the masses as never before. When the imperialist character of the war became patent to all, the Russian Soviet Republic was the only country that completely shattered the secret foreign policy of the bourgeoisie. It exposed the secret treaties and declared, through Comrade Trotsky, to all the countries of the world: We appeal to you to put an end to this war in a democratic way, without annexations and indemnities, and frankly and proudly declare the truth, a bitter truth, but the truth neverthless, that in order to end this war a revolution against the bourgeois government is required! But our cry met with no response. And so we had to pay the heavy price of that incredibly drastic and onerous peace which was forced upon us by the Brest-Litovsk Treaty and which filled many of our sympathisers with gloom and despair. That was because we were alone. But we were doing our duty. We told you that such are the aims of the war! The torrent of German imperialism was able to overwhelm us because it required a considerable period of time before our workers and peasants could achieve solid organisation. At that time we had no army; all we had was the old disorganised army of the imperialists, which had been driven to fight in a war for aims which the soldiers did not desire and with which they did not sympathise. It turned out that we had to undergo an extremely painful upheaval. It was a period in which the masses needed a respite from the painful imperialist war, and to realise that a new war was beginning. We are entitled to regard as our war the war we will wage in defence of our socialist revolution. That is what millions and tens of millions of people had to learn to understand from their own experience. It required months. The learning of this lesson was slow and painful. But by the summer of this year it became obvious to all that the lesson had at last been learnt; that a transformation had set in: that in order that the army, a product of the masses of the people, and an expression of their weariness and despair—which is sacrificing itself, and after four years of most sanguinary warfare is again prepared to go to war-might support the Soviet Republic it was necessary that the weariness and despair of the masses preparing to enter this war should give place to a clear realisation of the fact that it is indeed their own cause for which they were going to die, the cause of the workers' and peasants' soviets, the cause of the socialist republic. That has been achieved.

The victories we gained over the Czechoslovaks in the summer, and

the news now being received of victories, and quite considerable victories, prove that a transformation has set in, and that the most difficult of tasks—the creation, after four years of painful war, of a conscious socialist organisation of the masses—has been achieved. That consciousness has struck deep roots among the masses. Tens of millions of people have come to realise that they are grappling with a difficult job. And that is a pledge that we shall not succumb to despair, in spite of the fact that the forces of world imperialism, which at present are stronger than we, are being mustered against us; in spite of the fact that we are surrounded by the soldiers of the imperialists, who have come to realise the danger of a Soviet regime and are burning with a desire to strangle it; and in spite of the fact that we tell the truth and do not conceal that they are stronger than we are.

We declare that we are growing, that the Soviet Republic is growing. The cause of the proletarian revolution is growing faster than the imperialist forces are closing in upon us. We are full of hope and full of the certainty that we are waging war in the interests not only of the Russian socialist revolution, but of the world socialist revolution. Our hopes of victory are growing rapidly, because the enlightenment of our workers is growing.

What was the state of Soviet organisation last October? Only the first steps were being taken. We were still unable to put it on a proper basis. But now we have a Soviet Constitution. The Soviet Constitution, ratified in July, is, as we know, not the invention of a commission, it is not the creation of lawyers, nor is it copied from other constitutions. The world has never known such a constitution as ours. It embodies the experience of the struggle and organisation of the proletarian masses against the exploiters both of our country and of the whole world. We possess a fund of fighting experience. That fund of experience provided a striking corroboration of the fact that the organised workers created a Soviet government without bureaucrats, without a standing army, and without privileges (privileges in practise designed for the bourgeoisie), that they waged the struggle on the whole no worse than the others, and created the foundations of a new order in the mills and factories. We are entering into this work and are drawing into it new collaborators, who are essential in order to carry the Soviet Constitution into effect. We have now ready cadres of new recruits, young peasants, who must be

drawn into the work, become part of the new cadres and help to carry our cause to completion.

The last question on which I wish to dwell is the international situation. We are standing shoulder to shoulder with our international comrades, and we can now see for ourselves with what decision and energy they are expressing their conviction that the Russian proletarian revolution will march hand in hand with them, the international revolution.

As the international significance of the revolution grew, the imperialists of the whole world concentrated their forces more furiously against us. In October 1917 they regarded our republic as a curiosity not worthy of serious attention. In February they looked upon it as an experiment in socialism not to be taken seriously. But the army of the republic grew and gained strength. The most difficult task was accomplished—the creation of a socialist Red Army. As our cause gained in strength, and as its successes multiplied, the opposition and the hatred of the imperialists of all countries grew more rabid. They have now reached such a pitch that the British and French capitalists, who proclaimed that they were the enemies of Wilhelm, are on the verge of joining forces with this same Wilhelm for the purpose of strangling the socialist Soviet Republic. For they have come to realise that it is no longer a curiosity, or an experiment in socialism, but the real home, the genuine home of the world socialist revolution. Hence, with the growing success of our revolution the number of our enemies has also increased. We must realise what is facing us, without in any way concealing the gravity of our situation. And we are prepared to meet it. We are no longer alone: with us are the workers of Vienna and Berlin, who are rising to fight the same fight, and who perhaps will bring to our common cause a higher degree of discipline and class consciousness.

In order that you may realise how the clouds are gathering around our Soviet Republic and what dangers are threatening us, permit me to read you the full text of a note addressed to us by the German government through its consulate:

"G. V. Chicherin, People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs, Moscow, November 5, 1918.

"At the request of the German Government, the Imperial German Consulate has the honour to transmit the following to the Russian

Federative Soviet Republic: The German Government has twice already been obliged to protest against the impermissible agitation that is being carried on against German State institutions in the form of utterances made by official Russian authorities in contravention of Article 2 of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. It no longer considers it possible to confine itself to protesting against this agitation, which is not only a violation of the said stipulations of the Treaty, but a serious departure from international usage.

"When the Soviet Government established its diplomatic Legation in Berlin after the conclusion of the Peace Treaty, Herr Joffe, the appointed Russian Plenipotentiary, was definitely reminded of the necessity of refraining from all agitational and propagandist activities in Germany. To this he replied that he was acquainted with Article 2 of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty and was aware that in his capacity of representative of a foreign Power he must not interfere in Germany's internal affairs. Herr Joffe and the bodies under his charge accordingly enjoyed in Berlin the attention and confidence usually accorded to extra-territorial foreign legations. This confidence was, however, found to be misplaced. It has already been clear for some time that the Russian Legation was in intimate communication with certain elements who are working for the overthrow of the political system in Germany, and, by employing such elements in its service, was interested in a movement aiming at the overthrow of the existing system in Germany.

"Thanks to the following incident, which occurred on the 4th instant, it was revealed that the Russian Government, by importing leaflets calling for revolution, is even taking an active part in movements aimed at the overthrow of the existing order, thereby abusing the privilege of employing diplomatic couriers. Owing to the fact that one of the boxes forming part of the official baggage of the Russian courier who arrived in Berlin yesterday was damaged during transportation, it was ascertained that the box in question contained revolutionary leaflets printed in German and, judging by their contents, designed for dissemination in Germany.

"The German Government is furnished with further grounds for complaint by the attitude taken by the Russian Government in the question of the expiation to be made for the assassination of Count Mirbach, the Imperial Ambassador. The Russian Government solemnly declared that it would do everything in its power to bring the criminals to book. But the German Government has been unable to observe any signs of the prosecution and punishment of the criminals having been undertaken, or even of any intention of doing so. The murderers escaped from a house surrounded on all sides by the organs of Public Security of the Russian Government. The instigators of the murder, who have publicly admitted that it was resolved on and plotted by them, to this day go unpunished and, according to information received, have even been amnestied.

"The German Government protests against such violations of the Treaty and of public law. It must demand guarantees from the Russian Government that no further agitation and propaganda running counter to the Peace Treaty will be carried on. It must furthermore insist on the expiation of the murder of the Ambassador, Count Mirbach, by the punishment of the perpetrators and instigators of the murder. Until such time as these demands are fulfilled, the German Government must request the Government of the Soviet Republic to withdraw its diplomatic and other representatives from Germany. The Russian Plenipotentiary in Berlin was today informed that a special train for the departure of the diplomatic and consular representatives in Berlin and of other Russian officials in that city will be ready tomorrow evening, and that measures will be taken to secure the unhampered transit of these persons to the Russian frontier. The Soviet Government is requested to be kind enough to enable the German representatives in Moscow and Petrograd to leave at the same time, with the observance of all the demands of courtesy. Other Russian representatives in Germany, and likewise official German persons in other parts of Russia, will be informed that they must leave within a week, the former for Russia, the latter for Germany. The German Government takes the liberty of expressing the anticipation that all the rules of courtesy will be similarly observed towards the latter German official persons in connection with their departure and that other German subjects or persons under German protection will be allowed the opportunity of unhampered departure should they request it."

We know perfectly well that the German government was fully aware of the fact that from the very beginning of the war the German Socialists had enjoyed the hospitality of the Russian Embassy and that no supporters of German imperialism ever crossed the threshold of the Russian Embassy. Their friends were those Socialists who were op-

posed to the war and who sympathised with Karl Liebknecht. They have been guests of the Embassy ever since its inception; with them alone did we have any intercourse. The German government was perfectly aware of that. It followed the movements of every representative of our government as zealously as the government of Nicholas II used to follow the movements of our comrades. The German government is now making this gesture not because the situation has in any way changed, but because it formerly felt stronger, and was not afraid that one burning house on the streets of Berlin would start a conflagration throughout Germany. The German government has lost its head, and now that the whole of Germany is ablaze, it thinks it can put out the fire by turning its police hose on one single house.

That is simply ridiculous. If the German government proposes to break off diplomatic relations, all we can say is that we knew it would, that it was making every effort to achieve an alliance with the British and French imperialists. We know that Wilson's government sent telegram after telegram requesting that the German troops be left in Poland, the Ukraine, Esthonia and Latvia; for, although they are enemies of German imperialism, these troops are doing their work: they are crushing the Bolsheviks. Let them be withdrawn only when pro-Entente armies of liberation appear on the scene to strangle the Bolsheviks.

We are perfectly aware of that; this is not unexpected. We repeat that now that Germany is in flames and Austria is all ablaze, now that they have been compelled to liberate Liebknecht and allow him to visit the Russian Embassy, a decision made by a general meeting of Socialists headed by Liebknecht-such a step on the part of the German government shows, not so much that they want to fight, as that they have completely lost their heads. It shows that they are at a loss as to what decision to take; for a cruel foe is advancing upon them-Anglo-American imperialism, which has crushed Austria with a peace that is a hundred times more coercive than the Peace of Brest-Litovsk. Germany sees that these liberators want to crush, torture and strangle her too. But at the same time working class Germany is rising. The German army proved to be useless and unfit, not because discipline was weak, but because the soldiers who refused to fight were transferred from the Eastern front to the German Western front and carried with them what the bourgeoisie calls world Bolshevism.

That is why the German army proved unfit; and this document is

the best proof of their utter confusion. We say that it will lead to a diplomatic rupture, and perhaps might even have led to war, were they strong enough to lead the White Guard armies. We have therefore sent a telegram to all the Soviets, which concludes by calling upon them to be on their guard, to hold themselves in readiness, to muster all their forces, for this is a manifestation of the fact that the chief aim of international imperialism is to overthrow Bolshevism. That would not only mean defeating Russia; it would mean defeating their own workers in every country. But they will not succeed, no matter what brutalities and outrages may follow this decision. These vultures are preparing to swoop down on Russia from the South, through the Dardanelles, or by way of Bulgaria or Rumania. They are negotiating for the formation of a White Army in Germany to be thrown against Russia. We are fully aware of this danger, and publicly declare: Not in vain have we laboured a whole year; we have laid the foundation; we are approaching decisive battles, battles which will indeed be decisive. But we are not alone: The proletariat of Western Europe has risen; it has not left a stone standing in Austria-Hungary. The government of that country is as helpless, as wildly confused, has lost its head as completely as the government of Nicholas Romanov at the end of February 1917. Our cry must be: Bend every effort once more, and remember that we are approaching the last decisive fight, not for the Russian Revolution alone, but for the world socialist revolution!

We know that the imperialist vultures are still stronger than we are. They can still inflict wholesale outrage, brutalities and atrocities upon our country. But they cannot vanquish the world revolution. They are filled with savage hatred. And we therefore say: Come what may, every Russian worker and peasant will do his duty and will face death if the interests of the revolution demand it. We say: Come what may, no matter what miseries the imperialists may still inflict upon us, it will not save them. Imperialism will perish and the world socialist revolution will triumph in spite of all!

Speech at Sixth Extraordinary All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers', Peasants', Cossacks' and Red Army Deputies, November 6, 1918.

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### THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

COMRADES, from the very beginning of the October Revolution, foreign policy and international relations have been the cardinal issue that confronted us, not only because imperialism from now on implies one firm and strong chain of all the states of the world linked together into one system—not to say into one bloody and sordid lump—but because the complete triumph of the socialist revolution is inconceivable in one country alone and demands the most active collaboration at least of several advanced countries, among whose number Russia cannot be counted. That is why, the question of how far we shall succeed in extending the revolution in other countries too, and how far we manage to beat off imperialism until then, has become one of the cardinal issues of the revolution.

I will take the liberty of reminding you very briefly of the principal stages in our foreign policy during this past year. As I have already had occasion to mention in my speech in connection with the anniversary of the revolution,\* the chief feature of our position a year ago was our isolation. However strong our conviction that a revolutionary force was arising, and in fact had already arisen, all over Europe, that the war would not end without a revolution, yet there were then no signs that the revolution had begun or was beginning. That being the case, nothing remained for us but to direct our efforts in our foreign policy to enlightening the masses of the workers in Western Europe; enlightening them, not because we claimed to have been better prepared than they, but because as long as the bourgeoisie has not been overthrown in any country, a military censorship prevails, and that incredible bloody fog which shrouds every war, especially a reactionary war-and you are well aware that even in the most democratic republican countries war implies a military censorship and

<sup>•</sup> See pages 261-74 in this volume.—Ed.

the most incredible methods on the part of the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois military staffs to hoodwink the people—and we had to make known to other nations what we had achieved in this respect. We did all we could towards this when we tore up and published the sordid secret treaties concluded by the ex-Tsar in the interests of his own capitalists and the capitalists of Great Britain and France. You know that these treaties were predatory ones, through and through; you know that the government of Kerensky and the Mensheviks kept these treaties secret and endorsed them. Every now and again, by way of exception, we meet with statements in the relatively honest section of the British and French press to the effect that it was only thanks to the Russian Revolution that they, the French and British, have learnt much of essential importance concerning their diplomatic history.

Of course, we have done very little from the point of view of the social revolution as a whole, but what we have done is a big step in the preparations for that revolution.

If we now attempt to take a general view of the results we have achieved by exposing German imperialism, we shall find that the working people of all countries now see clearly and unmistakably that the war they were forced into was a bloodthirsty and predatory war. And towards the end of this year of war, there has begun a similar exposure of the conduct of England and America, for the masses are beginning to open their eyes and to see their real designs. That is all we have done; but we have contributed our mite. The exposure of these treaties was a blow to imperialism. From the standpoint of propaganda and agitation, the terms of peace we were compelled to consent to were a powerful instrument with the help of which we have done more than any other government or any other nation has ever done. The attempt we made to awaken the masses may not have yielded results all at once, but we never assumed that the revolution would begin immediately and that otherwise all would be lost. We have made two revolutions in the course of the past fifteen years, and we have seen how much time was required before they took hold of the masses. We find confirmation of this in the recent events in Austria and Germany. We said that we were not planning to form an alliance with the marauders and become marauders ourselves-no, what we planned was to awaken the proletariat of the enemy countries. We were greeted with jeers and told that while we were preparing to awaken the proletariat of Germany, it would strangle us before we had time to bring our propaganda to bear on it. But the facts have shown that we were right in assuming that the working masses of all countries are equally hostile to imperialism. All they need is a certain period for preparation, for even the Russian people, fresh as the memory of the 1905 revolution was in their minds, required considerable time before they rose up in a new revolution.

Before the Brest-Litovsk Peace, we had been doing everything we could to strike a blow at imperialism. The history of the growth of the proletarian revolution has not obliterated this, and if the Brest-Litovsk Peace compelled us to retreat in the face of imperialism, it was because in January 1918 we were still insufficiently prepared. Fate had condemned us to isolation, and we have had to go through this distressful period since the Brest-Litovsk Peace. Better a new alliance with the imperialists than sign such a peace, we were told.

When people were ready to give way to despair and said: better a new war together with the British and French than submit to a coercive peace—we said that if we appealed to the international workers we could continue our work. The four years of world war we went through ended in a peace, but it was a coercive peace. But even this coercive peace in the long run has shown that we were right and that our hopes were not built on sand. We grew stronger from month to month, while West-European imperialism grew weaker. And now we find as a result that Germany, which six months ago absolutely ignored our Embassy, and thought that there could not be a single Red house in that country, has, of late, at least, been growing weaker. We learn from the latest despatch that the German imperialists have issued an appeal to the masses calling upon them to remain calm and declaring that peace is near. We know what it means when emperors appeal to the people to remain calm and when they promise to do in the near future what it is beyond their power to do. If peace comes to Germany soon, it will be a Brest-Litovsk peace for them, which, instead of peace, will entail for the working masses worse sufferings than they have borne hitherto.

The effects of our international policy are such that six months after the conclusion of the Brest-Litovsk Peace—although we may be a defeated country from the point of view of the bourgeoisie—from the point of view of the proletariat we are entering a path of rapid growth and are now standing at the head of the proletarian army, which is beginning to shake Austria and Germany. This success fully justified in the eyes of every member of the proletarian masses all the sacrifices we have borne. Even if we were suddenly to be swept away—let us assume that the end of our activities had come, although that cannot be, for miracles do not happen—assuming, however, that this were to happen, we would still be entitled to say, while not concealing our mistakes, that the period destiny had granted us we had made full use of in the cause of the world socialist revolution. We have done everything for the labouring masses of Russia, and we have done more than anybody else for the world proletarian revolution.

In the past few months, in the past few weeks, the international situation has begun to change very sharply, so much so that German imperialism is now practically shattered. All those expectations from the Ukraine with which the German imperialists fed their working people have proved to be illusory. It seems that American imperialism has been preparing for the war, and Germany has been dealt a severe blow. An entirely new situation has arisen.

We have never cherished any illusions. After the October Revolution we were far weaker than imperialism, and even now we are weaker than international imperialism—we have to reiterate this even now, so as not to deceive ourselves. After the October Revolution we were the weaker, and could not accept battle. And we are the weaker now, too, and must do everything to avoid battle with it.

That we have been able to hold on for a whole year since the October Revolution is due to the fact that international imperialism was split into two groups of marauders—the Anglo-Franco-American and the German-which were locked in mortal combat and had no time for us. Neither of these groups could send any really considerable forces against us, although, of course, they would both have done so if they could. War, its bloody mist, veiled their eyes. The material sacrifices necessitated by the war called for the utmost exertion. They had no time for us, not because we were by some miracle stronger than the imperialists—that is nonsense, of course!—but only because international imperialism was split into two groups of marauders, which were trying to strangle each other. It is only this we have to thank for the fact that the Soviet Republic was able openly to throw down the gauntlet to the imperialists of all countries by depriving them of their capital in the shape of foreign loans, by slapping them in the face, by openly striking at these robbers' pockets.

The period of declarations, made in connection with the correspondence started by the German imperialists, in spite of the fact that world imperialism could not fling itself upon us with the fury warranted by its enmity and its thirst for capitalist profits, swollen to an unparalleled degree by the war-that period is now over. Ever since the British and American imperialists emerged as victors over the other group, they have been completely engrossed in a struggle among themselves, and have therefore been obliged to divert their attention from a decisive campaign against the Soviet Republic. The second group no longer exists; only one group remains, the victor group. This has completely changed our international position, and we have to reckon with this change. The relation of this change to the development of the international situation is shown by the facts. The defeated countries are now witnessing a victory of the workers' revolution, for its tremendous development is apparent to all. When we took power in October, we were nothing in Europe but a single spark. True, the sparks multiplied, and they spread for us. That was a tremendous thing we succeeded in doing; but still, they were only single sparks. But now we find that a conflagration has flared up and has enveloped the majority of countries: America, Germany, England. We know that from Bulgaria, the revolution has spread to Serbia. We know that these workers' and peasants' revolutions have swept through Austria and reached Germany. A whole series of countries are enveloped in the fire of a workers' revolution. In that respect, our efforts and the sacrifices we have made have been justified. They have proved themselves to be, not a reckless gamble, as our enemies slanderously asserted, but a necessary transition to the international revolution, inevitable for a country which had been pushed to the forefront despite its backward and undeveloped state.

That is one result, and the most important as regards the final issue of the imperialist war. Another result is the one I mentioned at the beginning; that Anglo-American imperialism has now begun to expose itself, just as Austro-German imperialism had done before. We see that if at the time of the Brest-Litovsk negotiations Germany had shown the least self-restraint, had kept a cool head, and had refrained from adventurous gambles, she might have retained her supremacy, and might very well have secured a favourable position in the West. She did not do so because a machine such as a war involving millions and tens of millions of people, a war which has inflamed chauvinist

passions to the utmost, and which affects capitalist interests measured in hundreds of billions of rubles—once such a machine has been set going, no brake can stop it. This machine has gone farther than the German imperialists themselves wanted it to go, and it has crushed them. They are caught; they are like a man who has so gorged himself as to endanger his life. And now we find that British and American imperialism is in this same unsightly, but-from the point of view of the revolutionary proletariat—very useful condition. One would have thought that they had far more political experience than Germany, having been through the most difficult period in their history hundreds of years ago. These are people who are accustomed to governing democratically; they are not German Junkers. One would have expected these people to keep a cool head. If we were to judge them as individuals, to decide whether they are capable of keeping a cool head, from the angle of democracy in general, as bourgeois philistines, professors, who have no conception of what the struggle between imperialism and the working class means—if we were to look at it from the standpoint of democracy in general, we would have to say that Great Britain and America are countries where democracy has been inculcated in the course of centuries, and that there the bourgeoisie ought to know how to maintain its power. At any rate, if, by one measure or another, it manages to maintain its power now, it would be for a fairly long time. But it appears that the same thing is now happening to them that happened to military, despotic Germany. In this imperialist war there is a vast difference between Germany and the republican countries. But imperialist war is so sanguinary, predatory and bestial a thing, that it has obliterated even these cardinal differences: It has levelled that freest of democracies, America, with semimilitary, despotic Germany.

We find England and America—countries with greater potentialities of remaining democratic states than any—going to just such savage and insensate lengths as Germany before them, and they are therefore just as rapidly, if not more rapidly, approaching the end which has so effectively been reached by German imperialism. The latter first swelled, spread over three-quarters of Europe, grew incredibly fat; then it burst, leaving a ghastly smell behind it. And that is the end for which British and American imperialisms are now heading. To convince ourselves of that, we have only to cast a fleeting glance at the terms of armistice and peace which the British and Americans, those

liberators of the nations from German imperialism, are now imposing on the defeated nations.

Take Bulgaria. One would have thought that a country like Bulgaria could hold no terrors for the colossus of British and American imperialism. Yet the revolution in this small, weak and absolutely helpless country has caused the English and Americans to lose their heads and to impose terms of armistice that are equivalent to occupation. Where a peasants' republic had been proclaimed, in Sofia, that important railway centre, all the railways have now been occupied by British and American troops. They have to fight a peasants' republic in a small country. From the military standpoint, that is nothing. Those who look at things from the standpoint of the bourgeoisie, of the old ruling class, of the old military relations, only smile contemptuously. After all, what is a pigmy like Bulgaria compared with the forces of Britain and America? Nothing at all from the military point of view, but a great deal from the revolutionary point of view. Bulgaria is not a colony, where it is the usual thing to slaughter the defeated by the million-and that, as you know, is what the English and Americans regard as establishing order, introducing civilisation and Christianity among African savages. But Bulgaria is not Central Africa; here soldiers-however strong their army may be-become demoralised when brought in contact with revolution. That these are not empty words is shown by Germany. In Germany, at least as far as discipline is concerned, the soldiers were exemplary. And when Germany marched into the Ukraine, other factors besides discipline operated. The starving German soldiers had gone to procure food, and to expect them not to grab all they could was, humanly speaking, absurd. Yet we know that in this country they were infected most by the spirit of the Russian Revolution. The German bourgeoisie realised this perfectly well, and that is what made Wilhelm so uneasy. The Hohenzollerns are mistaken if they think that Germany will shed a single drop of blood in their behalf. Such was the result of the policy of German imperialism, armed to the teeth. And we now find it being repeated in the case of England. Demoralisation has already set in among the Anglo-American forces; it began the moment they began to dragoon Bulgaria. And this is only the beginning. Bulgaria has been followed by Austria.

Allow me to read to you some of the clauses from the terms the victors, the British and American imperialists, are dictating. These

are the people who were most vociferous in impressing on the working masses that it was a war of liberation they were waging, and that their chief aim was to crush Prussian militarism, which threatened to spread its barrack regime to all countries. They loudly proclaimed that they were waging a war of liberation. That was a fraud. These bourgeois lawyers, these parliamentarians, who have spent their whole lives learning how to deceive without blushing, find it easy to deceive one another; but when it comes to deceiving the workers in that way, it cannot be done with impunity. Politicians, parliamentarians, the public men of England and America are smart at that sort of thing. But their efforts at deceit will not work: the working masses whom they have stirred up in the name of freedom will suddenly come to their senses-and this will make its effect felt-as soon as they all learn, not from manifestoes—which are of use, but do not appreciably advance the revolution-but from their own experience, who is deceiving them, when they learn the terms of peace with Austria.

This is the peace which those who cried that the Bolsheviks are traitors because they signed the Brest-Litovsk Peace are now imposing on a comparatively weak state that is already falling to pieces. When the Germans wanted to send their soldiers to Moscow, we said that we would rather lay down our lives in battle to a man than consent to such a thing. We realised that the sacrifices of the occupied regions would be heavy, but everybody knows how Soviet Russia helped these regions and supplied them with what they needed. And now the democratic soldiers of England and France are to be used to "maintain order"—and this at a time when there are Soviets of Workers' Deputies in Bulgaria and Serbia, in Vienna and Budapest. We know what this order means. It means that British and American soldiers are to act as butchers and hangmen of the world revolution.

When in 1848 Russian serf troops were sent to crush the Hungarian revolution, this could be done with impunity because they were serf troops. It could be done with impunity even with Poland. But it is altogether inconceivable that a people already enjoying a century of freedom and taught to hate German imperialism because it is a beast that must be destroyed, should not understand that Anglo-American imperialism is just such another beast which, in justice, must also be destroyed.

And now history, with the malicious irony characteristic of it, has brought it about that, after German imperialism, it is now the turn

of Anglo-French imperialism to expose itself, and it is doing it thoroughly. And we declare to the Russian, German and Austrian working class masses: "These are not the Russian serf troops of 1848! They cannot do this with impunity! They are going to crush a people which is about to liberate itself from capitalism—to strangle a revolution." And we say with absolute confidence that this gorged beast will meet its doom, just as did the beast of German imperialism.

I shall now deal with the aspect of the matter which affects us most of all. I shall pass to the terms of peace which Germany will be called upon to sign. Our comrades in the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs tell me that the Times, the leading organ of the incredibly wealthy bourgeoisie of England, which is actually the arbiter of all policy, has already published the terms which Germany will have to consent to. She will be called upon to cede Helligoland, the Kaiser Wilhelm Canal, and the city of Essen, where nearly all the armaments are manufactured, to scuttle the merchant marine; surrender Alsace-Lorraine and pay an indemnity of sixty billion—a large part of it in gold, as money has depreciated everywhere and the British merchants have also begun to reckon in another currency. We see that they are preparing a peace for Germany that amounts to regular strangulation and is more coercive than the Peace of Brest-Litovsk. Their material resources and forces would be enough to enable them to do it were it not for the existence of such an inconvenient thing as Bolshevism. They are digging their own grave with this peace. After all, this is happening in the twentieth century, and in civilised countries, not in Central Africa. The Ukrainians may have been illiterate, and the disciplined German soldiers may have been able to keep them under; but now the German soldier has buried his discipline. All the more will British and American imperialism bury itself by attempting such a gamble. By turning its troops into thugs and gendarmes of the whole of Europe this can only lead to its political collapse. They have long been trying to eliminate Russia; the campaign against her was conceived long ago. We have only to recall the seizure of Murmansk and the way they lavished millions on the Czechoslovaks and concluded an agreement with Japan; and now England has taken Baku, by treaty, away from the Turks, so as to strangle us by depriving us of raw material.

British troops are preparing to launch a campaign against Russia from the South, either from the Dardanelles, or through Bulgaria and Rumania. They are surrounding the Soviet Republic in a ring;

they are trying to sever economic relations between the republic and the rest of the world. With this purpose in view they have got Holland to break off diplomatic relations. When Germany expelled our Ambassador, she acted, if not in direct agreement with the British and French politicians, at any rate with the idea that by doing them a service they might be more generous to her; as though to say: "We too are playing the hangman against your enemies, the Bolsheviks."

The international situation may on the whole be summed up the way I summed it up the other day, \* namely, that never have we been so near to an international proletarian revolution as we are now. We showed them that no sacrifice can be too great when it is a question of the international proletarian revolution. Not in vain have we made such heavy sacrifices, both national and economic. In this respect we have been successful. But while we have never been so near to an international revolution, never, on the other hand, has our position been so dangerous as it is now. The imperialists were engrossed with each other. But now the Anglo-Franco-American group has swept away the other. They are making it their cardinal aim to stifle world Bolshevism, to destroy its chief seat, the Russian Soviet Republic. With this object in view they are preparing to build a Chinese Wall to protect themselves from Bolshevism, just as they protect themselves by quarantine from the plague. These people are trying to get rid of Bolshevism by quarantining it, but that is impossible. Even if the British and French imperialists, who command the most perfect technique in the world, succeed in erecting some such Chinese Wall around the republic, the bacillus of Bolshevism will penetrate these walls, all the same, and infect the workers of all countries.

The press of West-European, British and French imperialism is doing its best to cover up the state of affairs. There is no lie or slander they would hesitate to disseminate about the Soviet government. We may now say that the entire press in the hands of the British, French and American capitalists—and this press commands billions—like a solid machine is trying to conceal the truth about Soviet Russia and disseminate lies and calumnies about us. But although a military censorship has been raging for years and has succeeded in preventing a single word of truth about the Soviet Republic from finding its way into the press of the democratic countries, yet there is never a big workers' meeting in any country but reveals that the working class

<sup>\*</sup> See pages 242-56 in this volume.—Ed.

masses are on the side of the Bolsheviks; because the truth will out. The enemy accuses us of exercising a dictatorship of the proletariat. Yes, it is true, we make no secret of the fact! And because the Soviet government is not afraid and speaks frankly, it is winning over new millions of working people, for it is exercising the dictatorship against the exploiters. The working masses see this and are convinced that the fight against the exploiters is meant seriously and will be fought to a proper finish. In spite of the conspiracy of silence with which the European press is surrounding us—they have been saying all along that they regard it as their duty to march against Russia, because Russia has allowed herself to be seized by Germany, because Russia is actually a German agent, because in Russia the people at the head of the government are, in their opinion, German agents; every month new document fakers appear who receive good fees to prove that Lenin and Trotsky are out-and-out traitors and German tools-in spite of all this, they cannot conceal the truth, and every now and again some frank admission slips out which shows that these imperialist gentry do not feel very secure.

The Echo de Paris makes the following admission: "We are going to Russia to smash the power of the Bolsheviks." The official version over there is that they are not at war with Russia, are not interfering in military affairs, but are only against German domination. Our French internationalists, who publish a newspaper in Moscow called the Third International, quoted this passage, and although we have been cut off from Paris and France, although this Chinese Wall has been erected very skilfully, they say to their bourgeoisie, the French imperialists, that they stand no chance. And, naturally, hundreds of thousands of French workers are acquainted with this little quotation, and not with this one alone, and they see that all the statements of their rulers, of their bourgeoisie, are sheer lies. Their own bourgeoisie have blurted out the truth and admitted that they want to smash the power of the Bolsheviks. After four years of bloody war they have to say to their people: "Go now and fight Russia in order to smash the power of the Bolsheviks, whom we hate because they owe us seventeen billions and do not want to pay, and because they are rude to capitalists, landlords and tsars." Civilised nations, which have come to such a pass that they have to talk like this, betray first of all that their policy is going to the dogs, and, however strong they may be from the military standpoint, we regard their strength quite calmly

and say: "You have a more formidable enemy in your rear—the masses whom you have hitherto deceived; your tongue has dried up with all your lies and slanders about Soviet Russia."

A similar statement appeared in an English bourgeois newspaper, the *Manchester Guardian*, on October 23. This British bourgeois newspaper says: "If the Allied armies also remain in Russia and continue hostilities, their only purpose can be to bring about an internal revolution in Russia."

The Allied governments must therefore either cease hostilities or announce that they are at war with the Bolsheviks. I repeat, the importance of this small quotation, which sounds in our ears like a revolutionary call, like a powerful revolutionary appeal, is that it was written by a bourgeois newspaper, which is itself an enemy of the Socialists, but which feels that the truth cannot be concealed any longer. If the bourgeois newspapers talk like this, you can imagine what the British working masses are saying and thinking. You know what language the liberals used in our country under tsardom, before the revolutions of 1905 or 1917. You know that this language of the liberals was indicative of an approaching outbreak among the proletarian revolutionary masses. You can therefore conclude from the language of these British bourgeois liberals what is going on in the minds and hearts of the British. French and American workers. That is why we must conceal nothing and must admit the sad truth about our international position. The international revolution is near at hand, but revolutions do not develop according to a time-table; we who have been through two revolutions know that very well. But we also know that while the imperialists cannot stop the international revolution, the defeat of individual countries and even more dreadful losses are quite possible. They know that Russia is in the throes of a proletarian revolution; but they are mistaken if they think that by destroying one seat of the revolution they can destroy revolution in other countries.

As to us, we must admit that the situation is more dangerous than ever, and that we must go on exerting all our efforts. After having, in the space of one year, laid a solid foundation and created a socialist Red Army based on a new discipline, we may confidently assert that this work can and should be continued, and we must proclaim at all meetings, in all Soviet institutions, in the trade unions and at meetings of committees of poor peasants: Comrades, we have existed a whole

year and have achieved some success; but that is not enough in view of the powerful enemy that is bearing down upon us. That enemy is a world-wide enemy, British and French imperialism, which has vanquished the whole world. We are taking up the gauntlet not because we think of rivalling the foremost countries of Europe politically or technically. No; but we do know that this enemy is travelling the same road—that British and French imperialism, which has now enmeshed Turkey, seized Bulgaria and is engaged in occupying the whole of Austria-Hungary and installing a tsarist gendarme system there, is marching to its doom. This is a historical fact, and that is why, while not setting ourselves obviously unfeasible aims, we say that we can certainly repulse British and French imperialism.

Every step taken to strengthen our Red Army will be reechoed by ten steps towards demoralisation and revolution in the camp of this seemingly so powerful adversary. There is therefore not the slightest ground for pessimism or despair. We know that the danger is formidable. It may be that fate holds even heavier sacrifices in store for us. But even if they succeed in crushing one country, they will never succeed in crushing the international proletarian revolution; they will only serve to kindle it still more. And in its fires they will all perish!

Speech at Sixth Extraordinary All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers', Peasants', Cossacks', and Red Army Deputies, November 8, 1918.

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### COMBATING COUNTER-REVOLUTION AND SABOTAGE

COMRADES, in celebrating the anniversary of our revolution, I would like to say a few words about the onerous duties that fall to the lot of the Extraordinary Commissions.

It is not at all surprising to hear the activities of the Extraordinary Commissions attacked not only by enemies, but often enough by friends, too. It is a difficult task we have shouldered. When we took over the government of the country, we naturally made many mistakes, and it is only natural that the mistakes of the Extraordinary Commissions strike the eye most. The philistine intellectual fastens on these mistakes, refusing to go down to the root of the matter. What does surprise me in all these outcries about the mistakes of the Extraordinary Commissions is the manifest inability to put the question on a broad footing. People harp on individual mistakes the Extraordinary Commissions make, and raise a howl and lamentation over them.

We, however, say that we learn from our mistakes. In this field, as in all others, we say that we will learn by self-criticism. The root of the matter, is not, of course, the personnel of the Extraordinary Commissions, but the nature of their functions, which demand determined, swift, and, above all, unerring action. When I consider their functions and see how they are attacked, I say that this is all philistine and futile talk. It reminds me of Kautsky's homily on the dictatorship, which is tantamount to supporting the bourgeoisie. We, for our part, know by experience that the expropriation of the bourgeoisie entails a drastic struggle—a dictatorship.

Marx said that between capitalism and communism there lies the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat. The more the proletariat presses on the bourgeoisie, the more furiously will it resist. We know what vengeance was wreaked on the proletarians in France in 1848, and when people charge us with harshness, we wonder

how they can forget the first rudiments of Marxism. We have not forgotten the revolt of the military cadets in October, and we must not forget that a number of revolts are now being engineered. We have, on the one hand, to learn to work constructively, and, on the other, to smash the resistance of the bourgeoisie. The Finnish White Guards made no bones about shooting down workers, for all their boasted democracy. The realisation of the need for dictatorship has taken deep root in the minds of the masses, arduous and difficult though it is. That alien elements should try to worm their way into the Extraordinary Commissions is quite natural. With the help of self-criticism we shall get rid of them. The important thing for us is that the Extraordinary Commissions are directly exercising the dictatorship of the proletariat, and in that respect their services are inestimable. There is no way of liberating the masses except by forcibly suppressing the exploiters. That is what the Extraordinary Commissions are doing, and therein lies their service to the proletariat.

Speech at meeting and concert for staff of the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission, November 7, 1918 (as recorded by some one in the audience).

Pravda, No. 290, December 18, 1918.

# MEMORIAL TO THE FIGHTERS OF THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION

COMRADES, we are unveiling this memorial to the front-rank fighters in the Revolution of October 1917. Some of the finest representatives of the working masses laid down their lives in the struggle for the liberation of the peoples from imperialism, for the elimination of wars among nations, for the overthrow of the rule of capital, and for socialism.

Throughout many a decade of modern times the history of Russia has been one long martyrdom of revolutionaries. Thousands upon thousands perished in the struggle against tsardom. Their deaths served to rouse other champions and to enlist ever wider masses for the struggle.

To the lot of the comrades who perished in the October days of last year fell the great happiness of victory. Theirs was the greatest honour dreamt of by the revolutionary leaders of mankind; over the bodies of the comrades who fell valorously in battle marched thousands and millions of new champions as fearless as they, who by their heroism ensured the victory of the masses.

Today all countries are seething and boiling with the indignation of the workers. In a number of countries the workers' socialist revolution is rising. The capitalists of the world are hastening, in fear and rage, to band together to suppress the revolt. And the socialist Soviet Republic of Russia fills them with especial hatred. A united campaign of the imperialists of all countries is being plotted against us; new battles will be forced upon us; new sacrifices await us.

Let us honour the memory of the October fighters by vowing before this memorial to follow in their footsteps and emulate their fearlessness and heroism. Let their slogan be our slogan, the slogan of the insurgent workers of all countries. That slogan is: "Victory or death!"

And with this slogan on their lips, the fighters in the international socialist revolution of the proletariat will be invincible.

Speech at the unveiling of a memorial tablet to the fighters of the October Revolution, November 7, 1918.

Published in first (1926) edition of V. I. Lenin's Collected Works, Vol. XX, Book 2.

#### MEMORIAL TO MARX AND ENGELS

WE are unveiling a memorial to the leaders of the world workers' revolution, Marx and Engels.

For ages and ages humanity has suffered and languished under the yoke of an insignificant handful of exploiters, who maltreated millions of toilers. But while the exploiters of an earlier period—the landlords—robbed and oppressed the peasant serfs, who were disunited, scattered and ignorant, the exploiters of the new period, the capitalists, saw facing them among the downtrodden masses the vanguard of these masses, the urban, factory, industrial workers. These workers were united by the factory, they were enlightened by urban life, they were steeled by the common strike struggle and by revolutionary action.

The great and historic merit of Marx and Engels is that they proved by scientific analysis the inevitability of the collapse of capitalism and its transition to communism, under which there will be no more exploitation of man by man.

The great and historic merit of Marx and Engels is that they indicated to the proletarians of all countries their role, their task, their mission, namely, to be the first to rise in the revolutionary struggle against capital and to rally around themselves in this struggle all the toilers and exploited.

We are living in happy times, when the prophecy of the great Socialists is beginning to be realised. We see the dawn of the international socialist revolution of the proletariat breaking in a number of countries. The unspeakable horrors of the imperialist butchery of nations are everywhere evoking a heroic rise of the oppressed masses, and are lending them tenfold strength in the struggle for emancipation.

Let the memorials to Marx and Engels again and again remind the millions of workers and peasants that we are not alone in our struggle. Side by side with us the workers of the more advanced countries are rising. Severe battles still await them and us. In common struggle the yoke of capital will be broken, and socialism will finally be won!

Speech at the unveiling of a memorial to Marx and Engels, November 7, 1918.

Published in first (1926) edition of V. I. Lenin's Collected Works, Vol. XX, Book 2.

## THE REVOLUTION AND THE PEASANTS

COMRADES, the organisation of the poor peasants is the most important problem in our work of internal construction, and even in our whole revolution.

The aim of the October Revolution was to wrest the mills and factories from the hands of the capitalists so as to make the means of production the property of the whole people, and to reconstruct agriculture on socialist lines by handing over the whole land to the peasants.

The first half of this aim was much more easy to accomplish than the second. In the cities, the revolution dealt with large-scale industry in which hundreds of thousands of workers are engaged. The mills and factories belonged to a small number of capitalists, with whom the workers had no difficulty in coping. The workers had already gained years of experience in their earlier struggles against the capitalists, which had taught them to act concertedly, resolutely and in an organised way. Moreover, it was not necessary to divide up the mills and factories; all that was required was that all production should be made to serve the interests of the working class and the peasantry and that the products of labour should not fall into the hands of the capitalists.

But the case is entirely different with the land. Here, in order to secure the success of socialism, a number of transitional measures were required. To transform a vast number of small peasant farms into large farms cannot be done at once. Agriculture, which hitherto has been conducted on individual lines, cannot immediately be socialised and transformed into large-scale state enterprises, the products of which would be equally and justly distributed among the whole of the toiling people under a system of universal and equal labour service. It is impossible, of course, to achieve this immediately, or in a short space of time.

While the workers of the mills and factories in the cities have already succeeded in completely overthrowing the capitalists and casting off the yoke of exploitation, in the agricultural districts the real fight against exploitation has only just began.

After the October Revolution we smashed the landlord and deprived him of his land. But that did not end the struggle in the agricultural districts. The conquest of the land, like every other conquest by the toilers, can be permanent only when it is based on the independent action of the toilers themselves, on their own organisation, on their endurance and revolutionary determination.

Did the toiling peasants have this organisation? Unfortunately not; and that is the root cause, that is the reason why the struggle is so difficult.

Peasants who do not employ the labour of others, who do not profit at the expense of others, will, of course, always be in favour of the land being divided among everybody equally; they will always be in favour of everybody working, of the possession of land not serving as a basis of exploitation, and of numerous land holdings not therefore becoming concentrated in single hands. But it is different with the kulaks and the parasites who grew rich on the war, who took advantage of the famine to sell grain at fabulous prices, who concealed grain in expectation of higher prices, and who are now striving in every way to grow rich on the misfortunes of the people and on the hunger of the poor peasants and the workers in the cities.

They, the kulaks and parasites, are enemies no less formidable than the capitalists and landlords. And if the kulaks are not dealt with, if we do not vanquish the parasites, the return of the tsar and the capitalist will be inevitable.

The experience of every revolution that has hitherto occurred in Europe offers striking corroboration of the fact that revolution is inevitably doomed if the peasants do not throw off the domination of the kulaks.

Every European revolution ended in failure because the peasants could not cope with their enemies. In the cities the workers overthrew their kings (in England and France they executed their kings centuries ago; it was only we who are late with our tsar), yet after a certain interval the old order was restored. That was because in those days even in the cities there was no large-scale industry which could unite millions of workers in the mills and factories and weld them into

an army powerful enough to withstand the onslaught of the capitalists and the kulaks even without the support of the peasants.

The poor peasants were unorganised, fought the kulaks badly, and as a result the revolution was defeated in the cities as well.

But now the situation is different. During the last two hundred years large-scale production has developed so powerfully and has covered all countries with such a network of huge mills and factories employing thousands and tens of thousands of workers that now everywhere in the cities large cadres have been created of organised workers, the proletariat, who constitute a force strong enough to achieve final victory over the bourgeoisie, the capitalists.

In former revolutions the poor peasants had nowhere to turn for support in their difficult struggle against the kulaks.

The organised proletariat—which is stronger and more experienced than the peasantry (it gained that experience in earlier struggles)—is now in power in Russia and is in possession of all the means of production, all the mills and factories, the railroads, ships, and so forth.

The poor peasants now possess a reliable and powerful ally in their struggle against the kulaks. The poor peasants know that the city is behind them, that the proletariat will help them, is in fact already helping them, with every means in its power. That has been shown by recent events.

You remember in what a perilous state the revolution was last July. The Czechoslovak rebellion was spreading, the food shortage in the cities was becoming increasingly acute and the kulaks in the villages were becoming more and more insolent and more and more violent in their attacks on the cities, on the Soviet government and on the poor peasant.

We called on the poor peasants to organise. We proceeded to form committees and to organise workers' food detachments. The Left Socialist-Revolutionaries raised a revolt. They declared that the Committees of Poor Peasants consisted of idlers, and that the workers were robbing the toiling peasants of grain.

Our reply to them was that they were defending the kulaks, who realised that the Soviet government could be fought not only by arms but also by starvation. They talked about "idlers." And we asked, "But why has any particular individual become an 'idler,' why has he sunken, why is he impoverished, and why has he taken to drink?

Was it not because of the kulaks?" The kulaks, like the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, raised an outcry against "idlers," but they themselves were raking in grain, concealing it and profiteering, in the desire to grow rich on the hunger and sufferings of the workers.

The kulaks were squeezing the poor peasants dry. They were deriving advantage from the labour of others, at the same time crying, "Idlers!"

The kulaks awaited the Czechoslovaks with impatience. They would most willingly have enthroned a new tsar, in order to continue their exploitation with impunity, in order to continue to dominate over the farm labourer and continue to grow rich.

And salvation was wholly due to the fact that the village united with the city, that the proletarian and semi-proletarian elements of the countryside (those who do not employ the labour of others), together with the city workers, launched a campaign against the kulaks and the parasites.

In order to achieve this unity a great deal had to be done especially in connection with the food situation. The working class population of the cities was suffering severely from hunger, but the kulak said: "I shall hold back my grain a little longer, perhaps they will pay more."

The kulaks, of course, were in no hurry; they had plenty of money, they say themselves that they have accumulated Kerensky notes by the pound weight.

But people who at a time of famine are capable of concealing and hoarding grain are vicious criminals. They must be fought as the worst enemies of the people.

And this fight in the country districts we have begun.

The Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries tried to frighten us by asserting that in organising the Committees of Poor Peasants we were causing a split among the peasants. But what does "not causing a split" among the peasants mean? It means leaving them under the sway of the kulak. But that is exactly what we do not want, and we therefore decided to cause a split among the peasants. We said: True, we are losing the kulaks; that misfortune cannot be denied; but we shall win thousands and millions of poor peasants who will come over to the side of the workers.

And that is exactly what is taking place. The split among the peasants only served to show more clearly who are poor peasants, who

are middle peasants not employing the labour of others, and who are parasites and kulaks.

The workers have helped and are helping the poor peasants in their struggle against the kulaks. In the civil war which has broken out in the countryside the workers are on the side of the poor peasants, as they were when they passed the Socialist-Revolutionary law on the socialisation of the land.

We Bolsheviks were opposed to the law on the socialisation of the land. Yet we signed it, because we did not wish to go counter to the will of the majority of the peasantry. The will of the majority is binding on us always, and to oppose the will of the majority is to betray the revolution.

We did not desire to force on the peasants the idea that the equal division of the land was useless, an idea which was alien to them. We considered it better if the toiling peasants themselves, as a result of their own experience and their own suffering, came to realise that equal division was nonsense. Only then would we be able to ask them what, then, was the way of escape from the ruin and kulak domination that follow from the division of the land.

Division of the land was all very well as a beginning. Its purpose was to show that the land was being taken from the landlords and handed over to the peasants. But that is not enough. The solution lies only in common cultivation of the land.

This was not realised at the time, but we are being led to this conviction by the hard facts. Salvation from the disadvantages of small-scale farming lies in communes, cultivation by artels, or peasants' associations. That is the way to develop and improve agriculture, to economise forces and to combat the kulaks, idlers, and exploiters.

We were well aware that the peasants live rooted to the soil. The peasants fear innovations, they cling tenaciously to old habits. We knew that the peasants would come to believe in the benefits of any particular measure only when their own intelligence led them to understand and appreciate those benefits. And that is why we helped to divide the land, although we realised that this was not the solution.

But now the poor peasants themselves are coming to agree with us. Hard facts are teaching them that where ten ploughs, say, are required when the land is divided into one hundred separate holdings, a smaller number of ploughs suffices under communal farming because the land is not divided up so minutely. A commune permits a whole artel, or association, to make improvements in agriculture which are beyond the reach of individual small owners, and so forth.

Of course, not everywhere will it be possible to proceed to the common cultivation of the land immediately. The kulaks will resist it in every way—ay, and frequently the peasants themselves will stubbornly resist the introduction of communal principles in agriculture. But the more the peasants become convinced by example, by their own experience of the advantages of communes, the more successfully will matters progress.

In this respect the Committees of Poor Peasants are playing an extremely important part. Committees of Poor Peasants must cover the whole of Russia. For some time now, the development of these Committees have been proceeding intensively. The other day a Congress of Committees of Poor Peasants of the Northern Region was held in Petrograd. In place of the seven thousand representatives expected, twenty thousand actually turned up, and the hall assigned for the meeting was unable to accommodate them all. The situation was saved by the fine weather, which made it possible to hold the meeting on the square outside the Winter Palace.

This congress showed that the civil war in the countryside is being properly understood; the poor peasants are uniting and have formed solid ranks against the kulaks, the rich and the parasites.

The Central Committee of our Party has drawn up a plan for the reform of the Committees of Poor Peasants which will be submitted for the approval of the Sixth Congress of Soviets. We have decided that the Committees of Poor Peasants and the Soviets in the rural districts must not exist separately, for otherwise there will be squabbling and too much useless talk. We shall merge the Committees of Poor Peasants with the Soviets, we shall turn the Committees of Poor Peasants into Soviets.

We know that kulaks sometimes worm their way even into the Committees of Poor Peasants. If this continues the poor peasants will have the same sort of attitude towards the Committees of Poor Peasants as they had towards the kulak Soviets of Kerensky and Avksentyev. A change of name will fool nobody. It is therefore proposed to hold new elections of the Committees of Poor Peasants. Only those who do not exploit the labour of others, who do not make the hunger of the people a source of plunder, who do not profiteer on

grain surpluses and do not conceal them will be entitled to vote in the elections of the Committees of Poor Peasants. There must be no place for kulaks and for parasites in the proletarian Committees of Poor Peasants.

The Soviet government has decided to assign one billion rubles to a special fund for the improvement of agriculture. All existing communes and all new communes will receive monetary and technical assistance.

We shall send trained experts if they are required. Although the majority of them are counter-revolutionary, the Committees of Poor Peasants will be able to use them and they will work for the people no worse than they formerly worked for the exploiters. And, generally, our intellectuals have already become convinced that they will not overthrow the workers' government by sabotage and wilful damage to work.

Nor has foreign imperialism any terrors for us. Germany has already burnt her fingers in the Ukraine. In place of the sixty million poods of grain which she hoped to secure in the Ukraine, she got only nine million poods; and, in addition, she got Russian Bolshevism, for which she cherishes no particular sympathy. The British should take care the same thing does not happen to them, and we can say to them: "Beware you don't choke yourselves, friends!"

But the danger for us will continue to exist as long as our brothers abroad have not everywhere risen. And we must therefore continue to organise and strengthen our Red Army. The poor peasants should be particularly concerned in this matter, for they can carry on their husbandry only under the protection of our army.

The transition to the new form of agriculture may perhaps proceed slowly, but the principles of communal farming must be carried into practice unswervingly.

The fight against the kulaks must be fought energetically; there must be no compromise with them.

We can work with the middle peasants, and together with them fight the kulaks. We have nothing against the middle peasants. They are, perhaps, not Socialists, and never will be Socialists, but experience will teach them the advantages of common cultivation of the land, and the majority of them will not resist.

To the kulaks, however, we say: "We have nothing against you either, but hand over your surplus grain, do not profiteer and do not

exploit the labour of others. Until that is done we shall wage ruthless war on you." We are taking nothing from the toilers; but those who employ hired labour, who grow rich at the expense of others, we shall expropriate completely.

Speech delivered to delegates from the Committees of Poor Peasants of the Moscow Region, November 8, 1918.

Byednota, No. 185, November 10, 1918.

## THE REVOLUTION AND WOMEN

COMRADES, in a certain sense this congress of the women's detachment of the proletarian army is of particular significance, for in all countries it was the women who were slowest of all in coming into action. There can be no socialist revolution unless a vast section of the working women take a big part in it.

The position of women in all civilised countries, even the most advanced, is such that it is not without good reason that they are called domestic slaves. Women do not enjoy full equality in any capitalist state, not even in the freest of republics.

One of the first tasks of the Soviet Republic is to abolish all restrictions on the rights of women. The Soviet government has completely abolished divorce proceedings, that source of bourgeois sordidness, repression and humiliation.

It will soon be a year now since complete freedom of divorce was legislated. We have passed a decree annulling all distinction of status between the child born in wedlock and the child born out of wedlock, as well as a number of political restrictions. Nowhere else in the world has equality and freedom for working women been so fully established.

We know that it is the women of the working class who bear the full brunt of antiquated codes.

For the first time in history, our law has obliterated everything that made for the oppression of women. But the important thing is not the law. In the cities and industrial areas this law on complete freedom of marriage is taking good root, but in the countryside it all too frequently remains a dead letter. There religious marriage still predominates. This is due to the influence of the priests, an evil that is harder to cope with than the old legislation.

The struggle against religious prejudices must be carried on with extreme caution; serious harm is done in this struggle by those who

offend religious susceptibilities. The struggle must be waged by means of propaganda and education. By lending too sharp an edge to the struggle we may only arouse the resentment of the masses; such methods of struggle tend to perpetuate the division of the masses along religious lines, whereas our strength lies in unity. The most profound sources of religious prejudices are poverty and ignorance; and that is the evil we have to deal with.

The position of women has hitherto been such as to be likened to slavery; woman is crushed by domestic labour, and she can be rescued from this plight only by socialism, only when we pass from small enterprise to common enterprise and the common cultivation of the soil.

Only then will women be completely liberated and emancipated. That is a difficult task. Committees of Poor Peasants are being formed, and the time has now come when the socialist revolution is being consolidated.

Only now, for the first time, is the poorest section of the rural population beginning to organise, and in these organisations of the poor peasants socialism is acquiring a firm foundation.

Before, it often happened that the town became revolutionary and was then followed by the countryside.

But the present revolution rests on the countryside, and therein lie its significance and strength. The experience of all liberation movements has shown that the success of a revolution depends on how much the women take part in it. The Soviet government is doing everything in its power to enable women to carry on independent proletarian socialist work.

The position of the Soviet government is a difficult one because the imperialists of all countries hate Soviet Russia and are preparing to go to war with her for kindling the fire of revolution in a number of countries and for taking determined steps towards socialism. Now that they are out to destroy revolutionary Russia, the ground is beginning to burn under their own feet. You know that the revolutionary movement is spreading in Germany. In Denmark a struggle is taking place between the workers and the government; Holland is in process of conversion into a Soviet Republic. The revolutionary movement in these small countries has no importance in itself, but it is particularly significant because there was no war in these countries and they had the most "constitutional" democratic system. If countries like

these are stirring into action, it fills us with the assurance that the revolutionary movement is taking a hold all over the world.

No republic hitherto has been able to emancipate woman. The Soviet government will help her. Our cause is invincible because the invincible working class is rising in all countries. This movement signifies the spread of the invincible socialist revolution.

Speech at the First All-Russian Congress of Working Women, November 19, 1918.

Pravda, No. 57 (298), March 10, 1925.

# PITIRIM SOROKIN'S LETTER

COMRADES, I should like to say a few words about a letter which appeared in yesterday's *Pravda*. It was written by a prominent member of the Constituent Assembly and of the Right Socialist-Revolutionary Party—Pitirim Sorokin. In this letter, Sorokin announces to his constituents that he abjures the title of member of the Constituent Assembly and renounces all further part in politics. Not only is this letter an extremely interesting human document; it is also of major political significance.

As we know, Pitirim Sorokin was the editor of the Right Socialist-Revolutionary Volya Naroda [People's Will] which worked hand in hand with the Cadets. This admission in a published letter is symptomatic of the profound crisis and change which is taking place among people who were hitherto sharply hostile to the Soviet government. When he says that the policy of some leaders is in many cases socially harmful, it only shows that Pitirim Sorokin is at last openly and honestly admitting that the whole policy of the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries was socially harmful.

In consequence of recent events, many representatives of this party are beginning to understand that the time has come when the absolute correctness of the Bolshevik position is becoming manifest and all the blunders and mistakes of its irreconcilable enemies are being exposed.

Sorokin's letter shows that in the case of quite a number of groups that were hostile to us we may count on their maintaining a neutral attitude towards the Soviet government, at the present moment at least. Many were repelled from us by the monstrous Brest-Litovsk Peace, many had no faith in the revolution, many religiously believed in the purity of the aims of the Allies; but now all this has been exposed, and everybody can see that the notorious Allies, who have dictated terms to Germany even more monstrous than those of the

Brest-Litovsk Peace, are robbers no less than the German imperialists. The Allies, as we know, are in favour of a monarchy in Russia. They are actively supporting the monarchists in Archangel, for example. The purpose of the British in Russia is to take the place of the defeated German imperialists. All this has helped to open the eyes of even the most bigoted and ignorant opponents of the revolution.

Hitherto, there have been many who were blindly in favour of a Constituent Assembly. But we always said that a Constituent Assembly was the cry of the landlords, the monarchists and the entire Russian bourgeoisie, headed by Milyukov, who is auctioning off Russia right and left to the highest bidder.

The American republic is throttling the working class. Everybody knows now what a democratic republic means. Now it is clear to everybody that there can be either triumphant imperialism or a Soviet regime—there is no middle course.

Speech at Moscow meeting, November 20, 1918.

Pravda, No. 253, November 22, 1918.

#### VALUABLE ADMISSIONS BY PITIRIM SOROKIN

PRAVDA today gives space to a remarkably interesting letter by Pitirim Sorokin, to which the attention of all Communists should be particularly drawn. In this letter, which was printed in the Izvestia of the North Dvina Executive Committee, Pitirim Sorokin announces his resignation from the Right Socialist-Revolutionary Party and his abjuration of the title of member of the Constituent Assembly. The motives of the author of the letter are that he finds difficulty in providing effective political recipes, not only for others, but even for himself, and that therefore he "renounces all politics." "The past year of revolution," Pitirim Sorokin writes, "has taught me one truth: politicians may make mistakes, politics may be socially useful, but may also be socially harmful, whereas work in the field of science and public education is always useful and is always needed by the people...." The letter is signed: "Lecturer at Petrograd University and the Psycho-Neurological Institute, ex-Member of the Constituent Assembly and ex-Member of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, Pitirim Sorokin."

This letter is deserving of attention in the first place because it is an extremely interesting "human document." We do not often meet with such sincerity and frankness as are displayed by P. Sorokin in admitting the error of his politics. In practically the majority of cases politicians who become convinced that the line they have been pursuing is erroneous endeavour to conceal their change of front, to hush it up, to "think up" more or less extraneous motives, and so on. A frank and honest admission of one's political error is in itself an important political act. Pitirim Sorokin is wrong when he says that work in the field of science "is always useful." For mistakes are made even in this field, and there are examples even in Russian literature of the obstinate advocacy of, for instance, reactionary philosophical

views by people who themselves are obviously not reactionary. On the other hand, a frank declaration by a prominent person—a person who has occupied a responsible political post known to the people at large—of his abjuration of politics is in itself politics. An honest confession of a political error is bound to be of great political benefit to many people, if the error was shared by whole parties which at one time enjoyed influence over the masses.

The political significance of Pitirim Sorokin's letter is immense, especially at the present moment. It is a "lesson" which should be carefully pondered over and understood by all of us.

It is a truth long known to every Marxist that in every capitalist society the only decisive forces are the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, while all social elements standing midway between these classes and coming within the economic category of the petty bourgeoisie inevitably vacillate between these decisive forces. But there is an enormous gulf between an academic recognition of this truth and the ability to draw the conclusions that follow from it in the complex conditions of practical life.

Pitirim Sorokin is representative of an extremely broad public and political current, the Menshevik-Socialist-Revolutionary current. That this is a single current, that the difference between the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries in their attitude towards the struggle of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat is insignificant, has been very convincingly and strikingly borne out by the events of the Russian Revolution since February 1917. The Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries are varieties of petty-bourgeois democrats—that is the economic essence and fundamental political characteristic of the current in question. We know from the history of the advanced countries how frequently this current in its early stages assumes a "Socialist" hue.

The question arises: What was it that, several months ago, so forcibly repelled the representatives of this current from the Bolsheviks and from the proletarian revolution, and what is it that is now inducing them to change from hostility to neutrality? It is quite obvious that the cause of this change was, firstly, the collapse of German imperialism as the result of the revolution in Germany and other countries and the exposure of Anglo-French imperialism, and, secondly, the dispelling of bourgeois-democratic illusions.

Let us deal with the first cause. Patriotism is one of the most

deeply ingrained of sentiments, reinforced by hundreds and thousands of years of separate national existence. One of the most pronounced, one might say, exceptional, difficulties of our proletarian revolution is that it was compelled to pass through a phase of radical divergence from patriotism, the phase of the Peace of Brest-Litovsk. The bitterness, fury and fierce disgust provoked by this peace were easy to understand, and it goes without saying that we Marxists could expect only the class-conscious vanguard of the proletariat to appreciate the truth that we were making and were obliged to make great national sacrifices for the sake of a more supreme interest, the interest of the world proletarian revolution. There was no source from which ideologists who were not Marxists and the broad mass of the toilers who did not belong to the proletariat—which has been trained in the long school of strikes and revolution—could derive either the firm conviction that the revolution was developing, or an unreserved devotion to the revolution. At best, our tactics appeared to them a fantastic, fanatical and foolhardy sacrifice of the immediate and obvious interests of hundreds of millions for the sake of an abstract, utopian and dubious hope of something that might occur in other countries. And the petty bourgeoisie, owing to its economic position, is more patriotic than the bourgeoisie or the proletariat.

But it turned out as we had foretold.

German imperialism, which had seemed to be the only enemy, collapsed. The German revolution, which had appeared to be a "dream-farce" (to use Plekhanov's expression), became a fact. Anglo-French imperialism, which the fantasy of the petty-bourgeois democrats pictured as a friend of democracy and a protector of the oppressed, turned out to be a savage beast, which forced on the German republic and the peoples of Austria terms worse than those of the Peace of Brest-Litovsk, a savage beast which used armies of "free" republicans-French and Americans—as gendarmes, butchers and throttlers of the independence and freedom of small and weak nationalities. Anglo-French imperialism was exposed by world history with a ruthless thoroughness and frankness. The facts of world history demonstrated to the Russian patriots, who would hear of nothing that was not to the direct advantage (as formerly understood) of their country, that the transformation of our Russian Revolution into a socialist revolution was not a dubious venture but a necessity, for there was no other alternative: British, French and American imperialism would inevitably

destroy the independence and freedom of Russia if the world socialist revolution, world Bolshevism, did not triumph.

Facts are stubborn things, the English proverb says. And during these past few months we have witnessed facts that signify a definite turning point in world history. These facts are compelling the petty-bourgeois democrats of Russia, in spite of their hatred of Bolshevism, inculcated by the history of our internal party struggle, to turn from their hostility to Bolshevism, first to neutrality towards and then to support of Bolshevism. The objective conditions which repelled these democratic patriots from us most strongly have now vanished. World objective conditions are now such as to compel them to turn towards us. Pitirim Sorokin's change of front is by no means fortuitous, but rather the symptom of an inevitable change of front on the part of a whole class, of the entire petty-bourgeois democracy. Whoever fails to reckon with this fact and to learn from it is not a Marxist but a bad Socialist.

Furthermore, faith in "democracy" as a universal panacea, in general, and failure to understand that this democracy is bourgeois democracy, historically limited in its efficacy and its necessity, have for decades and centuries held particularly strong sway over the petty bourgeoisie in all countries. The big bourgeois is case-hardened; he knows that under capitalism a democratic republic, like every other form of state, is nothing but a machine for the suppression of the proletariat. The big bourgeois knows this from his intimate acquaintance with the real leaders and with the most deep-seated (and therefore frequently the most concealed) springs of every bourgeois state machine. The petty bourgeois, owing to his economic position and his conditions of life generally, is less able to appreciate this truth, and even cherishes the illusion that a democratic republic implies "pure democracy," "a free people's state," the non-class or supra-class rule of the people, a pure manifestation of the will of the people, and so on and so forth. The tenacity of these prejudices of the petty-bourgeois democrat is inevitably due to the fact that he is further removed from the acute class struggle, from the bourse and from "real" politics; and it would be absolutely un-Marxian to expect that these prejudices can be eradicated by propaganda alone, and very rapidly at that.

But world history is now moving with such furious speed, is smashing everything customary and old-established with a hammer of such immense weight, by crises of such unparalleled intensity, that the most tenacious prejudices are giving way. The naive belief in a Constituent Assembly and the naive habit of contrasting "pure democracy" with "proletarian dictatorship" grew up naturally and inevitably in the mind of the "democrat in general." But the experiences of the Constituent Assembly supporters in Archangel and Samara, in Siberia and the South, could not but destroy even the most tenacious of prejudices. Wilson's idealised democratic republic proved in practice to be a form of the most rabid imperialism, of the most shameless oppression and suppression of weak and small nationalities. The average "democrat in general," the Menshevik and the Socialist-Revolutionary, thought: "How can we even dream of a supposedly superior type of government, of a Soviet government! God grant us even an ordinary democratic republic!" And, of course, in "ordinary" comparatively peaceful times such a "hope" would have sufficed for many a long decade.

But now the course of world events and the bitter lessons derived from the alliance of the Russian monarchists with British, French and American imperialism are providing in practice that the democratic republic is the bourgeois democratic republic, which has already become antiquated from the point of view of the problems which imperialism has placed on the agenda of history. They show that there is no other alternative: either the triumph of the Soviet regime in every advanced country of the world, or the triumph of the most reactionary, the most savage imperialism, which is throttling all the small and weak nationalities and reinstating reaction all over the world—Anglo-American imperialism, which has perfectly mastered the art of using the form of a democratic republic.

One or the other.

There is no middle course. Until quite recently this view was regarded as the blind fantaticism of the Bolsheviks.

But it turned out to be true.

That Pitirim Sorokin has renounced the title of member of the Constituent Assembly is not fortuitous; it is a symptom of a change of front on the part of a whole class, of the entire petty-bourgeois democracy. A split among this class is inevitable: one section will come over to our side, another will remain neutral, while a third will deliberately join forces with the monarchist Cadets, who are trying to sell Russia to Anglo-American capital and striving to crush the Revolution with the aid of foreign bayonets. One of the most urgent

tasks of the present day is to appreciate and take advantage of the fact that the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary democrats have turned from hostility to Bolshevism, first to neutrality and then to support of Bolshevism.

Every slogan issued by the party to the masses tends to become frozen and lifeless, to retain its validity for many people even when the conditions which rendered that slogan necessary have changed. That is an unavoidable evil, and it is impossible to give the party a correct policy unless we learn to combat and overcome that evil. The period in our proletarian revolution when its differences with the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary democrats were particularly acute was historically necessary: it was impossible to avoid waging vigorous war on these democrats when they swung over to the camp of our enemies and set out to restore a bourgeois and imperialist democratic republic. Many of the slogans of this war have now become frozen and petrified and prevent us from properly appreciating and taking effective advantage of the new period, when a change of front has begun among these democrats, a change in our direction, not a fortuitous change, but one rooted in the profound conditions of the international situation.

It is not enough to encourage this change of front and amicably greet those who are turning towards us. A politician who realises his duty must learn to provoke this change of front among the various sections and groups of the broad mass of the petty-bourgeois democracy, if he is convinced that serious and profound historical causes for such a change of front exist. A revolutionary proletarian must know whom to suppress and with whom—and when and how—to conclude agreements. It would have been ridiculous and foolish to refrain from employing terror against and suppressing the landlords and capitalists and their henchmen, who were selling Russia to the foreign imperialist "Allies." It would have been farcical to attempt to "convince" or generally to "psychologically influence" them. But it would be equally foolish and ridiculous—if not more so—to insist exclusively on tactics of suppression and terror in relation to the petty-bourgeois democrats when they are being induced by the course of events to turn towards us.

And the proletariat encounters these democrats everywhere. Our task in the rural districts is to destroy the landlord and smash the resistance of the exploiter and the kulak profiteer. For this purpose we

can rely firmly only on the semi-proletarians, the "poor peasants." But the middle peasant is not our enemy. He vacillated, is vacillating and will continue to vacillate. The task of influencing the vacillators is not identical with the task of overthrowing the exploiter and defeating the active enemy. The task at the present moment is to learn to come to an agreement with the middle peasant, while not for a moment renouncing the struggle against the kulak and at the same time firmly relying solely on the poor peasant, for it is precisely now that a turn in our direction on the part of the middle peasantry is inevitable, owing to the causes above enumerated.

This applies equally to the handicraftsman, the artisan, and the worker whose conditions are most petty-bourgeois or who has most preserved petty-bourgeois views, and to many office workers and army officers, and—in particular—to the intellectuals generally. It cannot be doubted that we frequently observe in our party an inability to take advantage of this change of front among them and that this inability can and must be overcome and transformed into an ability to do so.

We already have a firm basis of support among the vast majority of the proletarians organised in the trade unions. We must know how to win over the least proletarian and most petty-bourgeois sections of the toilers, who are turning towards us, to include them in the general organisation and to bring them under the general proletarian discipline. The slogan of the moment here is not to fight these sections, but to win them over, to know how to influence them, to convince the waverers, to make use of the neutrals, and, by mass proletarian influence, to educate those who are lagging behind or who have only very recently begun to emancipate themselves from "Constituent Assembly" and "patriotic-democratic" illusions.

We already have a sufficiently firm basis of support among the toiling masses. This was strikingly borne out by the Sixth Congress of Soviets. We are not afraid of the bourgeois intellectuals, and we shall not for a moment relax the struggle against the deliberate saboteurs and White Guards among them. But the slogan of the moment is to make use of the change of attitude towards us that is taking place among them. There are still more than a few of the worst representatives of the bourgeois intelligentsia who have wormed their way into Soviet office. To eject them, to replace them by intellectuals who recently were deliberately hostile to us but who are now only neutral—

that is one of the most important duties of the moment, the duty of every active Soviet worker who comes into contact with the "intelligentsia," the duty of every agitator, propagandist and organiser.

gentsia," the duty of every agitator, propagandist and organiser.

Of course, like every political action in a complex and rapidly changing situation, achieving agreement with the middle peasantry, with the workers who were recently Mensheviks and with the office workers or intellectuals who were recently saboteurs, requires skill. The whole point is not to rest content with the skill we acquired by our earlier experience, but definitely to go on further, definitely to strive for something bigger, definitely to proceed from simple tasks to more difficult ones. Otherwise, no progress is possible in general, and no progress is possible in socialist construction in particular.

The other day representatives from a congress of delegates of credit cooperative societies came to see me. They showed me a resolution adopted by their congress protesting against the merger of the Credit Cooperative Bank with the People's Bank of the Republic. I told them that I stood for agreement with the middle peasantry and highly valued even the beginnings of a change in attitude from hostility to neutrality towards the Bolsheviks on the part of the cooperators, but a basis for agreement would be created only by their consent to the complete merger, especially of their bank, with the united Bank of the Republic. The representatives of the congress thereupon replaced their resolution by another, which they had the congress adopt, and in which everything hostile to the merger was deleted; but—they proposed a plan for a special "credit union" of cooperators, which actually in no way differed from a special bank! That was funny. Only a fool, of course, will be satisfied or deceived by verbal retouchings. But the "failure" of one such... "attempt" will not affect our policy in the least: we have pursued and will continue to pursue a policy of agreement towards the cooperators, the middle peasants, at the same time suppressing every attempt to change the line of the Soviet government and of Soviet socialist construction.

Vacillation on the part of the petty-bourgeois democrats is inevitable. The Czechoslovaks had only to score a few successes, for these democrats to fall into a panic, to begin to spread panic, to hasten to the side of the "victors" and to be prepared to greet them servilely. Of course, it must not be forgotten for a moment that a few minor successes of, let us say, the Anglo-American-Krasnov White Guards will be sufficient to start them swinging in the other direction, to increase panic

and to multiply cases of the dissemination of panic, cases of treachery and desertion to the imperialist, and so on and so forth.

We are aware of that. We shall not forget it. The pure proletarian basis for the Soviet government, supported by the semi-proletarians, which we have achieved, will remain firm and immutable. Our troops will not falter, our army will not waver—that we already know from experience. But when profound historic changes induce an inevitable change of front in our direction among the mass of non-party, Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary democrats, we must learn and shall learn to take advantage of this change of front, to encourage it, to evoke it among appropriate groups and strata, to do everything possible to reach agreement with these elements, and thus facilitate the work of socialist construction and mitigate the severities of the painful disruption, the ignorance and lack of ability which are retarding the victory of socialism.

Prauda, No. 252, November 21, 1918.

# **RED OFFICERS' DAY**

I GREET you on behalf of the People's Commissars, Lenin said. Whenever I ponder over the tasks of our army and Red officers, I recall an incident I witnessed in the train on the Finland Railway not so long ago.

I noticed that the people around me were smiling at something an old woman was saying, and I asked to have her words translated. This Finnish woman was comparing the old soldiers with the revolutionary soldiers, and she said that whereas the former protected the interests of the bourgeoisie and the landlords, the latter protected the poor. "Formerly, the poor man had to pay heavily for every stick of wood he took without permission," the old woman said. "But when you meet a soldier in the woods nowadays he'll even give you a hand with your bundle of faggots. You don't have to fear the man with the gun any more," she said.

In my opinion, Lenin continued, it would be hard to imagine any higher tribute to the Red Army than this.

Lenin went on to say that most of the old officers were the spoiled and depraved darling sons of capitalists, and that between them and the private soldier there was nothing in common. And now, therefore, in building our new army, we must draw our officers solely from the ranks of the people. Only Red officers will enjoy prestige among the soldiers and will be able to strengthen socialism in our army. Such an army will be invincible.

Newspaper account of speech delivered on "Red Officers' Day," November 24, 1918.

Izvestia, No. 258 (522), November 26, 1918.

#### COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES

COMRADES, I greet you as the representatives of the workers' cooperative movement, which has an enormous part to play in the proper organisation of supply. We in the Council of People's Commissars have had several occasions, especially recently, to discuss matters affecting the cooperative societies and the attitude of the workers' and peasants' government towards them.

In this connection, it should be recalled how important in the old days, under the power of capitalism, was the function of the cooperative societies, which were based on the principle of economic struggle against the capitalist class.

It is true that in their approach to the practical work of distribution, the cooperative societies very often forsook the people's interests for the interests of individual groups, frequently being guided by the motive of sharing commercial profits with the capitalists. Guided often by commercial interest, cooperators would forget all about the socialist system, which to them seemed something very remote and unattainable.

Many of the cooperative societies consisted chiefly of petty-bourgeois elements, middle peasants, whose aims in the cooperative movement were determined by their petty-bourgeois interests. However, these cooperative societies had the undoubted effect of developing the independent initiative of the masses, and that was greatly to their credit. It is a fact that, on the basis of the independent initiative of the masses, the cooperative societies built up large business organisations—and in doing so it cannot be denied that they played an important role.

Some of these business organisations developed into organisations capable of replacing and complementing the capitalist apparatus; that must be admitted. During this time the urban proletariat became so closely drawn into the organisation of large-scale capitalist industry

that it grew strong enough to overthrow the class of landlords and capitalists and to utilise the entire capitalist machine.

The urban proletariat realised well enough that the havoc caused by the imperialist war rendered it essential to set the machinery of supply going, and for this purpose it made use, in the first place, of the big capitalist machinery.

This should not be forgotten. The cooperative societies are an immense cultural heritage, which must be treasured and utilized.

And, therefore, when in the Council of People's Commissars we had occasion to discuss the functions of the cooperative societies, we approached the matter very cautiously, realising perfectly how important it was to make the utmost use of all this efficient business machinery.

But at the same time we could not ignore the fact that the leading men in the cooperatives were Mensheviks, Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and members of other compromising and petty-bourgeois parties. We could not ignore this as long as these political groups, standing as they do between the two belligerent classes, were using the cooperative societies partly as a refuge for counter-revolutionaries, and were even using the accumulated funds of the cooperative societies to support the Czechoslovaks. Yes, we had information to that effect. However, this was by no means the case everywhere, and we often invited the cooperative societies to collaborate with us if they only wished to.

What is more, the international position of Soviet Russia has recently taken such a turn that the significance of the workers' and peasants' state has become clear to many petty-bourgeois groups.

When Soviet Russia was faced with the Brest-Litovsk Treaty and we were forced to conclude this most distressful peace with the German imperialists, the Mensheviks and Right Socialist-Revolutionaries cried out loudest against us. When Soviet Russia was compelled to sign this peace, the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries went about crying everywhere that the Bolsheviks were ruining Russia.

Some of these people held that the Bolsheviks were utopians who had the fantastic idea that a world revolution was possible. Others held that the Bolsheviks were agents of the German imperialists.

Lastly, many of them then believed that the Bolsheviks had yielded to German imperialism, and grinned maliciously over the idea that this meant an agreement with the German ruling bourgeoisie.

I will not mention the even more unflattering remarks, to put it mildly, that these groups used to give vent to about the Soviet government.

However, recent developments all over the world have taught the Mensheviks and Right Socialist-Revolutionaries a great deal. The appeal of the Menshevik Central Committee to all working people, recently published in our press, declares that while they differ with the Communists ideologically, they consider it necessary to combat world imperialism, which is now headed by the capitalists of Britain and America.

And, in fact, events of tremendous importance have occurred. Soviets of Workers' Deputies have been formed in Rumania and Austria-Hungary. In Germany, the Soviets are opposing a Constituent Assembly, and perhaps within a few weeks the Haase-Scheidemann government will fall and be replaced by a Liebknecht government. At the same time, the British and French capitalists are bending every effort to crush the Russian Revolution and thereby call a halt to the world revolution. By now it is clear to all that the appetites of the Allied imperialists even exceed those of the German: the terms they have demanded of Germany are even worse than the Brest-Litovsk Peace; and, what is more, they are out to stifle the revolution generally and act as international gendarmes. The Mensheviks' resolution shows that they can now see which way the English breeze is blowing. And what we must do now is not to repel them, but, on the contrary, to welcome them and give them the opportunity to work with us.

Even as far back as last April, the Communists demonstrated that they have no objection to working with the cooperators. It is the task of the Communists, while relying on the urban proletariat, to learn to make use of all who can be enlisted in the work, of all those who formerly accepted the socialist slogans but did not have the courage to fight for them to the point of victory or defeat. Marx said that the proletariat must expropriate the capitalists, but must know how to utilise the petty-bourgeois groups. And we say that everything must be taken away from the capitalists; but as to the kulaks, they should only be pressed to the wall and brought under the control of the grain monopoly. We must reach agreement with the middle peasant, take him under our control, while practically carrying out the ideals of socialism.

We must say quite frankly that the workers and poor peasants will

do their utmost to give practical effect to the ideals of socialism, and if anyone considers that these ideals do not fit in with his own, we shall go on without him. But we must utilise everybody who can be of real service to us in this difficult struggle.

And so the Council of People's Commissars discussed these matters and arrived at an agreement with the cooperatives already in April. This was the only meeting at which, besides the Communist People's Commissars, representatives of civilian cooperative societies were present.

We thrashed the matter out with them. This was the only meeting at which a decision was adopted not by a majority of Communists, but by a minority—the cooperators.

And the Council of People's Commissars agreed to this, because it considered it essential to utilise the experience and knowledge of the cooperators and their machinery.

You are also aware that several days ago a decree, published in the *Izvestia* last Sunday, was adopted on the organisation of supply, and that in this decree an important place is assigned to cooperation and the cooperatives. For without a network of cooperative societies, the organisation of a socialist economic system is impossible. So far many mistakes have been made in this respect. Some of the cooperative societies were closed down and nationalised, although the Soviets were unable to cope with the work of distribution, with the organisation of Soviet shops.

Well, according to this decree, everything that was taken away from the cooperative societies is to be returned to them.

The cooperative societies are to be denationalised and restored.

It is true that the decree deals cautiously with those cooperatives which were closed down because they were infested with counter-revolutionaries. We said quite definitely that in this respect the activities of the cooperatives must be taken under control. Nevertheless, we say that the cooperatives must be utilized to the full.

You will all realise that one of the chief tasks of the proletariat is to place the business of supply and distribution of products on a proper footing at once.

And since we have a machinery which possesses experience in this field and—and that is the chief thing—is based on the initiative of the masses, we must set it going to perform these tasks. The main thing is to utilise the initiative of the masses who created these organisations.

It is essential to enlist the services of the rank and file in the work of supply, and we must make this the chief functions of the cooperative societies, and of the workers' cooperatives in particular.

The supply and distribution of goods is a business which everybody can understand. Even a man who has not sweated over books can understand it. And in Russia a very large part of the population is ignorant, because everything was done to keep the workers and the oppressed masses away from education.

But among the masses there are many virile forces capable of displaying immense ability, much more than might be imagined. And it is the duty of the workers' cooperatives to enlist these forces, to seek them out and put them on the job of supply and distribution. Socialist society is one big cooperative.

And I have no doubt that with the initiative of the masses, the workers' cooperative societies will really succeed in building up a united, city-wide Moscow consumers' commune.

Speech delivered at a meeting of representatives of the Moscow Central Workers' Cooperative Society, November 26, 1918.

Published in the magazine Rabochy Mir, No. 19, 1918.

## THE PETTY-BOURGEOIS PARTIES

COMRADES, I should like to discuss with you the tasks which the question of the policy of the proletariat towards the petty-bourgeois democracy imposes on our party and the Soviet government. Recent events undoubtedly place this question on the order of the day, because the vast changes that have taken place in the international situationsuch as the annulment of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, the revolution in Germany, the collapse of German imperialism and the disintegration of British and American imperialism-could not but undermine a number of bourgeois democratic tenets which constituted the theoretical foundation of the petty-bourgeois democracy in particular. The military position of Russia, the onslaught of British, French and American imperialism, which has entered into alliance with the upper ranks of the intelligentsia, were bound to bring a section of this pettybourgeois democracy more or less over to our side. And what I should like to discuss with you this evening are the changes which we have to introduce into our tactics, the new tasks that are confronting us.

Allow me to begin with certain fundamental theoretical propositions. There can be no doubt that the chief social stratum which still offers an economic basis for a petty-bourgeois democracy is, in Russia at least, the middle peasantry. There is no doubt that the socialist revolution and the transition from capitalism to socialism are bound to assume special forms in a country where the peasant population is numerically large. I should therefore like first of all to remind you of the main tenets of Marxism with regard to the attitude of the proletariat towards the middle peasantry. In order to do so, I shall read certain statements made by Engels in his article "The Peasant Question in France and Germany." This article, which was published in pamphlet form, was written in 1895 or 1894, when the agrarian program of the Socialist Party, its attitude towards the peasantry, became a

practical issue in connection with the discussion of the program of the German Social-Democratic Party at its Breslau Congress. This is what Engels said about the attitude of the proletariat at the time:

"What then is our attitude towards the small peasantry? Firstly, what the French program proposes is absolutely right. We foresee the inevitable ruin of the small peasant, but it is not our business to hasten it by our interference. And, secondly, it is equally obvious that when we are in possession of the state power we shall not even think of forcibly expropriating the small peasants (whether with or without compensation is immaterial), as we shall be compelled to do in the case of the big landowners. Our first task in relation to the small peasants is to help to convert their enterprise and property from private into cooperative, not by force, however, but by example and by rendering social assistance for this purpose."

Engels further says on this subject:

"We can never promise the small peasants to uphold their individual enterprise and individual property in face of the supremacy of capitalist production. All we can promise them is that we will not forcibly intervene in their conditions of property against their will."

And the last statement I would like to remind you of is the argument about the rich peasants, the big peasants, the kulaks, as we call them in Russia, the peasants, that is, who resort to the employment of hired labour. For these peasants Marxists can do nothing in the socialist society.

"If these peasants realise that the downfall of their present mode of production is inevitable and draw the necessary conclusions, let them come over to us, and it will be our duty to facilitate to the best of our ability their transition, too, to the new mode of production. Otherwise, we shall have to abandon them to their fate...."

These are the precepts of which I wanted to remind you, and which are no doubt known to every Communist. We see from them that the task of the proletariat, when it has taken possession of the state power, cannot be identical in countries where large-scale capitalism predominates and in countries where a backward, small, middle and big peasantry predominates. And it will be seen that we were interpreting the tasks of Marxism quite correctly when we said that in relation to the landlord, the exploiter, war was our direct duty.

As regards the middle peasant, we say: no force under any circum-

stances; as regards the big peasant, we say: our slogan is to bring him under the control of the grain monopoly and to fight him when he violates the monopoly and conceals grain. The other day I had occasion to expound these principles at a meeting of several hundred delegates from the Committees of Poor Peasants who had come to Moscow at the time of the Sixth Congress.\* In our party literature, as in our propaganda and agitation, we have always stressed this difference in our attitude towards the big bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie; but while we are all Communists and are all in agreement as to theory, not all of us, by a long shot, drew the proper political conclusions, or drew them rapidly enough.

I deliberately began, so to speak, with an introduction with the middle peasant—in order to show you by what economic categories and by what economic concepts regarding the mutual relations of the classes we must be guided if our policy towards the bourgeois democracy is to be based on incontrovertible foundations. And there can be no doubt that this small-peasant class—by a middle peasant we mean one who does not sell his labour power—that these peasants, in Russia at least, constitute the chief economic class which is the source of the broad diversity of political trends among the bourgeois democracy. Here in Russia these trends were associated mostly with the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary parties. The history of socialism in Russia records a long struggle between the Bolsheviks and these parties, and it should be mentioned that the West-European Socialists, for example, always regarded this struggle as an internal struggle of the Socialist movement. Even to this day you will constantly encounter this view among the Socialists of Western Europe. As they see it, the struggle between the Mensheviks and the revolutionaries is an internal struggle, one, that is, that signifies a split in the Russian Socialist movement. I may say in parenthesis that this view is expressed often enough even in the utterances of good Social-Democrats.

Only today I was handed a letter from Friedrich Adler, a man who is well known for his revolutionary conduct in Austria. How fully this view is reflected in his letter, which was written at the end of October and received today, can be seen from the request it contains to release the Mensheviks from prison. He could find nothing cleverer to write about at a moment like this. True, he makes the reservation that he is not well-informed about the movement, and so on. But still it is charac-

<sup>•</sup> See pages 292-99 in this volume.—Ed.

teristic that what strikes the eye of the West-European democrat is the sad fate of the Socialists in Russia. This absurd error of the West-European Socialists is due to the fact that they are looking backward, not forward, and forget that every day of the revolution has shown that neither the Mensheviks nor the Socialist-Revolutionaries, who preach socialisation, can be classed as Socialists. It is an absurd mistake that takes the letter for the fact. As in November and December 1917, so today, after we have been through the revolution, the Mensheviks continue to vacillate. To us it is clear, and there can be no doubt about it, that only people who deliberately turn their backs on the revolution can deny this truth. All through the Revolution of 1917 the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries did nothing but vacillate between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat; they could never stick to a straight line of conduct, as though they had deliberately set out to illustrate Marx's words, his maxim that the petty bourgeoisie is incapable of taking an independent stand in decisive battles. The behaviour of our Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries is the best confirmation of this old maxim. No better confirmation could be imagined. And, of course, it is from these facts, from the way they behaved in practice from these facts, not from their programs, professions and promises, that we must draw our conclusions regarding the socialist character of these parties.

Not only the subsequent struggle of the Mensheviks against our party at the time of the revolution, when our slogans, programme and tactical principles were corroborated by the experience of the struggle—not only the hostile stand the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries then took up towards our party, but, it must be said, the whole struggle they have waged for years, for decades even, has also proved baseless and unsound. On the other hand, that the fierce struggle which the Bolsheviks waged against the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries for decades was right and essential has been demonstrated by the whole course of the revolution.\*

From the very beginning, when it was forming the Soviets, the proletariat took up an intense and definite class stand—although perhaps less conscious than that of the bourgeoisie—by the very fact that it formed the Soviets and rallied against the bourgeoisie under the slogan, "All power to the Soviets!"—thereby enunciating a complete platform, laying down a clear policy and defining its whole

<sup>\*</sup> Several lines following this passage undecipherable in the stenographic report.—Ed.

tactics. The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, on the other hand, vacillated all the time. And when their own friends, in the spring and summer of 1917, labelled them semi-Bolsheviks, this was not merely a witticism, but a true description both of the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, a reflection of the fact that on every single issue—take the question of the Soviets, of the revolutionary movement in the countryside, of the direct seizure of the land, of fraternisation at the front, of whether to support imperialism or noton all these fundamental issues the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries would say "yes" one day and "no" the next, would help on the one hand, and hinder on the other, all the time displaying their spinelessness and helplessness, dancing attendance on the bourgeoisie and meekly submitting to it, or, rather, doing just what it wanted. Yet, on the other hand, in their propaganda among the people they were always spouting about the Soviets. It is a fact that they always referred to the Soviets as the revolutionary democracy and contrasted them with what they called the propertied elements. This was a cunning political artifice on their part, and the broad masses who heard them talk like this were carried away and believed that they were really in favour of the Soviets.

But the preachings of the Mensheviks were partly of service to us too. This is a very complex question, and there is a long and rich history behind it. I need only dwell on it briefly. And I think that it has been quite incontrovertibly proved by events. Well, this policy, the policy of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries in the revolution, is a practical and conclusive proof of our assertion that to regard them as Socialists is a mistake. If they were Socialists, it was only in their phraseology and reminiscences; actually they are nothing but Russian petty bourgeois.

That is why I began with the attitude Marxists should adopt towards the middle peasant. It explains the principles of our policy, and must be embodied in the attitude of the Communists towards the petty-bourgeois parties. We are now coming to a stage when our earlier slogans, our slogans of the earlier period of the revolution, must be changed in order to take proper account of the present turn of the tide.

You know that in October and November these elements wavered; you know that they strove to form a new government—of one kind or another. You will remember that the Bolshevik Party stood adamant

in the summer and was correct when it said that we should have to annihilate the enemies of the proletariat, that we were facing a battle on the fundamental issues of war or peace, of bourgeois representation, and of Soviet government. In all these questions we could rely only on our own forces, and we were absolutely right when we refused to compromise with the petty-bourgeois democracy. They tried very hard to make us accept their form—but we flatly rejected it. Whether we were right or not has been shown by the subsequent events. The subsequent course of events was the difficulties over peace, the negotiations for a peace of all the nations, and the conclusion of the peace of Brest-Litovsk. You know that on these grounds their vacillations went so far that the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty repelled them altogether.

There was to be a Constituent Assembly in Russia. You know that when the Constituent Assembly turned out to be Right Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary it was dissolved. \*

The consequence of these two circumstances—of our foreign policy, which led to the conclusion of the Brest-Litovsk Peace, on the one hand, and of our ruthless struggle against the illusions of a section of the democracy, against the ideology of the bourgeois democracy, of our ruthless struggle for a Soviet regime, on the other—the consequence of these two circumstances was that the petty-bourgeois democracy sharply recoiled from us. You know that after the Brest-Litovsk Peace, the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries began to waver, one section took to open warfare, while another began to split up, and is splitting to this day. But the fact remains, Because we were ruthless in our struggle against bourgeois parliamentarism and that bourgeois democratic prejudice, the Constituent Assembly, because, in our defence of the Soviet government and its revolutionary policy, we set worldwide revolution above all else and demanded that every internationalist should subordinate all national interests to this policy and should not shrink from national sacrifices, because of this slogan-because of the Brest-Litovsk Peace-the entire petty-bourgeois democracy recoiled from us. Of course, we cannot doubt for one minute, we cannot doubt one iota, that our policy was absolutely right. To start proving that now would be to repeat rudiments, because what the German revolution has proved more than anything else is that our views were correct. What we were reproached for most after the Brest-Litovsk Peace, and

<sup>\*</sup> Several words in the stenographic report undecipherable.—Ed.

what we heard most often from the less enlightened among the working class masses was that our hopes of a German revolution were in vain and were not being fulfilled.

The German revolution has refuted all these reproaches and has proved that we were right in our view that it had to come and that we had to fight German imperialism not only by a national war, but also by propaganda and by undermining it from within. Events have justified us so fully that no further proof is necessary. The same applies to the Constituent Assembly; vacillations on this score were inevitable, and the course of events has proved the correctness of our views so fully that all the revolutions now beginning in the West are taking place under the slogan of Soviet government and are setting up Soviet governments. Soviets—that is the distinguishing feature of the revolution everywhere; they have spread from Austria and Germany to Holland and Switzerland, countries with the oldest democratic cultures, which call themselves Western Europe, even in relation to Germany. Even in these countries the demand for Soviet government is being raised. That means that the historical collapse of bourgeois democracy was not an invention of the Bolsheviks, but an absolute historical necessity. In Switzerland and Holland, the political struggle took place hundreds of years ago, and it is not for the sake of the Bolsheviks' beautiful eyes that the demand for Soviet government is being raised there now. That means that we gauged the situation rightly. The course of events has borne out the correctness of our tactics so clearly that it is not worth while dwelling on the subject any further. Only we must realise that this is a serious question, one affecting the most deep-seated prejudices of the petty-bourgeois democracy. Recall the general history of the bourgeois revolution and the development of parliamentarism in all the West-European countries, and you will find that a similar prejudice prevailed among the old Social-Democrats in all countries. In France, these views persisted longest. It could not be otherwise.

When it comes to parliamentarism, the petty-bourgeoisie is the most patriotic; it is far more patriotic than the proletariat or the big bourgeoisie. The latter is more internationally inclined. The petty bourgeoisie is less mobile, is not connected to the same extent with other nations and has not been drawn into the orbit of world trade. It was therefore impossible to expect anything else than that on the question of parliamentarism the petty bourgeoisie should be most in

evidence. And such proved to be the case in Russia too; it was the petty bourgeoisie that recoiled from us most. An important factor was that the revolution had to struggle against patriotism. At the time of the Brest-Litovsk Peace we had to go against patriotism. We said that if you are a Socialist you must sacrifice all your patriotic feelings to the international revolution, which is bound to come; the revolution has not come yet, but you must believe in it if you are an internationalist.

And, naturally, speaking like this, we could only hope to win over the advanced sections of the working class. It was only natural that the majority of the petty-bourgeois democratic forces should not share our view. We could scarcely expect them to. How could the petty bourgeoisie be expected to accept our point of view? Here we had to exercise the dictatorship of the proletariat in its sternest form. When the petty bourgeoisie recoiled from us we had to break down this illusion in Russia, we had to put an end to the period of infatuation with this illusion and smash it. All this was done in the space of a few months. But if you take the history of the West-European countries, you will find that they did not get over this illusion even in decades. Take the history of Holland, France, Great Britain and so on. We had to smash the petty bourgeois illusion that the people are one united whole and that the will of the people can be expressed in any other way than class struggle. This illusion kept its hold on the advanced countries for decades, while we in the space of a few months shot past it with lightning speed; we had to smash this illusion by force. The consequence was that at that time we had the entire petty-bourgeois democracy against us.

We were absolutely right in rejecting all compromise on this score. If we had made any concessions to petty-bourgeois illusions, to illusions about the Constituent Assembly, we would have ruined the whole cause of the proletarian revolution in Russia. We would have sacrificed to narrow national interests the interests of the international revolution, which turned out to be proceeding along Bolshevik lines, because it was not national, but purely proletarian. Well, the result of these conditions was that the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary petty-bourgeois masses recoiled from us. They went over to the other side of the barricades; they landed in the camp of our enemies. When the Dutov revolt broke out, we saw that it was among the followers of Dutov, Krasnov and Skoropadsky that the troops and the political

forces that had been fighting us were to be found. Here the political situation led to civil war. On our side stood the proletariat and the poor peasantry.

You know that during the Czechoslovak mutiny, when it was registering its greatest success, kulak revolts broke out all over Russia. It was only the closer ties formed between the urban proletariat and the peasants that lent strength to our rule. It was only the proletariat, with the help of the poor peasants, that faced the onslaught of all enemies. The overwhelming majority of both the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries sided with the Czechoslovaks, the followers of Dutov and Krasnov. This state of affairs demanded a ruthless struggle on our part and terrorist methods of warfare. However people may have condemned this terrorism from their different points of view-and we heard such condemnations from all the vacillating Social-Democrats—to us it is clear that it was neccessitated by the acute civil war. It was necessary because the entire petty-bourgeois democracy had turned against us. They fought us by all kinds of methods-civil war, bribery and sabotage. It was these conditions that necessitated the terror. And therefore we should not repent of it or renounce it. Only we must clearly realise what were the conditions of our proletarian revolution that gave rise to these acute forms of struggle. These special conditions were that we had to go against patriotism, that we had to supersede the Constituent Assembly by the slogan: "All power to the Soviets!"

The change in international politics was inevitably followed by a change in the position of the petty-bourgeois democracy. We are observing a change of spirit in their camp. In the manifesto of the Mensheviks we find an appeal to renounce the alliance with the propertied classes, an appeal addressed by the Mensheviks to their friends, people from among the petty-bourgeois democracy who had concluded an alliance with the followers of General Dutov, the Czechoslovaks and the British—they were most likely parties to this alliance themselves. Now the Mensheviks are calling upon them to go and fight British and American imperialism. It is now clear to everybody that, except for British and American imperialism, there is no force that can put up any sort of stand against the Bolshevik power. Similar vacillations are to be observed among the Socialist-Revolutionaries and among the intellectuals, most of whom share the prejudices of the bourgeois democracy and were under the sway

of patriotic sentiments. A similar process is to be observed in their ranks too.

The duty of our party now is to be guided by class relations when choosing its tactics, and to be perfectly clear whether this is just a thing of chance, a manifestation of spinelessness, vacillations without any foundation to them, or, on the contrary, a process that has profound social roots. If we examine this question as a whole from the standpoint of the relations between the proletariat and the middle peasantry, as theoretically established, from the standpoint of the history of our revolution, we shall find that there can be no doubt about the answer. This change of front is not a chance or personal thing. It involves millions and millions of people whose status in Russia is either that of middle peasants or of something equivalent to the middle peasants. The change of front involves the entire petty-bourgeois democracy, which opposed us with a bitterness amounting almost to fury because we had to break down all its patriotic sentiments. But history has taken such a turn that patriotism is now turning towards us. It is obvious that the Bolsheviks cannot be overthrown except by foreign bayonets. Until now the petty bourgeoisie hoped that the British, French, and Americans stood for real democracy; until now it still cherished that illusion; but now that illusion is being completely dispelled by the peace that is being imposed on Austria and Germany. The British are behaving as if they had made it their special purpose to prove the correctness of the Bolshevik views on international imperialism. The British, French and Americans are behaving as if they had made it their purpose to prove that the Bolshevik views were right. And hence voices are being raised in the ranks of parties that fought us, in the Plekhanovite camp, for example, saying: "We were mistaken; we thought that German imperialism was our chief enemy and that the Western countries-France, England and America-would bring us a democratic system. But now it appears that the peace these Western countries offer is a hundred times more humiliating, rapacious and predatory than our Peace of Brest-Litovsk." We find that the British and Americans are acting as the hangmen of Russian freedom, as gendarmes, just as this role was played under that Russian butcher, Nicholas I, and are doing it no less effectively than the kings who played the hangman in throttling the Hungarian revolution. This role has now been assumed by Wilson's agents. They are throttling the revolution in Austria, they are playing the gendarme, they are issuing an ultimatum to Switzerland: "You'll get no bread from us if you don't join the fight against the Bolshevik government." They tell Holland: "Don't you dare to allow Soviet ambassadors into your country, or we'll blockade you." Theirs is a simple weapon—the noose of famine. That is what they are throttling the people with. But the noose may prove to be not very secure....\*

The history of recent times, of the war and post-war period, is distinguished by an extraordinary speed of development, and it proves the thesis that British and French imperialism is just as infamous as German imperialism. Do not forget that even in America, where we have the freest of all republics, the best and perhaps the most democratic, that does not prevent her imperialism from behaving just as brutally; there, internationalists are not only lynched, they are dragged into the street by the mob, stripped naked, tarred and burned; there, they are not only against peace, but against any manifestation of pacifism.

All these developments are helping to expose the imperialists most effectively, and they raise the alternative: either a Soviet government, or the utter suppression of the revolution by British and French bayonets. Here, there is no longer any question of an agreement with Kerensky; you know they have cast him away like a squeezed lemon. They joined forces with Dutov and Krasnov, marched on Murmansk, and especially on Archangel. Now they have gone beyond that phrase, they realise that very well. Patriotism is now driving them to us—that is how things have turned out, that is how history has compelled them to act. And we must all draw the lesson from this general experience of world history. The bourgeoisie cannot be defended, the Constituent Assembly cannot be defended, because it has actually proved that it plays into the hands of the Dutovs and Krasnovs. It seems funny how they could have made the Constituent Assembly their slogan; but that happened because when the Constituent Assembly was being convened the bourgeoisie was still in the saddle. The Constituent Assembly proved to be an organ of the bourgeoisie, and the bourgeoisie was on the side of the imperialists, whose policy was directed against the Bolsheviks. It was prepared to go to any length, to resort to the vilest means, only to throttle the Soviet government; to sell Russia to anybody, only to destroy the power of the Soviets.

Such is the policy of the Cadets, the policy which they have pursued

<sup>•</sup> Several words in the stenographic report undecipherable.—Ed.

and which has led to civil war. And this policy, which is of tremendous world significance, has made our petty-bourgeois democracy change their front. Of course, there is always bound to be vacillation among them, they will always remain what they are. When the Czechoslovaks gained their first victories, these bourgeois intellectuals tried to spread rumours that the Czechoslovaks were bound to win. Telegrams from Moscow were printed declaring that the city was surrounded and on the eve of capture. And we know perfectly well that if the British and French gain even the slightest success, the petty-bourgeois intellectuals will be the first to lose their heads, give way to panic and spread all sorts of rumours about the successes of our adversaries. But the revolution showed that revolts against the war were inevitable; even Germany has risen against imperialism. And now "our allies," too, have proved to be among the chief enemies of Russian freedom and independence.

Russia cannot and will not be independent unless the Soviet power is consolidated. That is why this change of front has taken place. And it makes it incumbent upon us to define our tactics towards it. It would be a great mistake to think of applying this slogan of our revolutionary struggle to that period when there could be no reconciliation between us, when the petty bourgeoisie was against us, and when our inflexible determination demanded resort to terror. Today, this would not be inflexible determination, but sheer stupidity-a failure to understand Marxist tactics; because Marxist tactics are determined by the relation of classes, and we must gauge them from the standpoint of world revolution. When we were obliged to sign the Brest-Litovsk Peace, this step seemed, from the narrow patriotic standpoint, to be a betrayal of Russia; but from the standpoint of world revolution it was a correct strategical step, which was of the greatest help to the world revolution. The world revolution has broken out just now, when the Soviet power has become an institution of the whole people.

And although the bourgeois democracy is still wavering, its illusions have been shaken. And we must of course take this state of affairs into account, as we must all the other conditions, as well as the words of Engels, and what I mentioned at the beginning in connection with this reminder. There should now be a better foundation for this than ever. Although formerly a different view did exist among us, the one expressed here—namely, to win over the middle peasant by persuasion

and example, and not by force—yet because he sided with the Czechoslovaks, the use of force was inevitable; for war is war, and when at war you have to fight.

But now that these people are beginning to swing over to us, we must not turn away from them simply because the slogan in our leaflets and newspapers used to be a different one. When we find them turning towards us, we must rewrite our leaflets, because the attitude of this petty bourgeois democracy towards us has changed. We must say: "Come along, we are not afraid of you; if you think the only way we know how to act is by force, you are mistaken; we might reach agreement." All those people who are permeated with the traditions of bourgeois prejudice, all those cooperators, all those sections of the working people who are connected with branches of production and bourgeois professions which are necessary in capitalist society but which we will discard in a socialist society, would then all come out to meet us half way. Take the intelligentsia. They lived like the bourgeois, they are accustomed to certain comforts. When they swung towards the Czechoslovaks, our slogan was ruthless struggle—terror.

But now that there is this change of sentiment among the petty-bourgeois masses, our slogan must be one of agreement, of utilising these relations for practical purposes—not, however, by force, but by treating them as neighbours and allies. When we happen to meet up with declarations from the petty-bourgeois democracy to the effect that it wants to be neutral towards the Soviet power, since it must maintain its position in relation to this power, we may say: neutrality and neighbourly relations are old-fashioned rubbish and absolutely useless from the point of view of communism—it is just old-fashioned rubbish, and nothing else; but we must consider this rubbish from the practical standpoint. That has always been our view; we never hoped that these petty-bourgeois elements would become Communists; but it is a proposition worth discussing.

We said of the dictatorship of the proletariat that the proletariat must dominate over all other classes. We cannot obliterate the differences between classes until communism is fully established. Classes will remain until we have abolished the exploiters—the big bourgeoisie and the landlords, whom we are ruthlessly expropriating. But we cannot say the same thing of the middle and small peasants. Here, too, we require the domination of the proletariat over the other classes.

We must be relentless in expropriating the bourgeoisie and the land-lords, but we must win over the petty-bourgeois democracy. People may scoff at this and say that you have only to have a thorough idea of the food situation and the state of the railways to see that you will never win anybody over that way. That is the reply they are most likely to make, but we will say: "Were we right in our policy of fighting imperialism? Can you say that we took the wrong course?" What they need is examples, examples about which we are all confident, however they may reproach or abuse us. They will never fall into this "Asiatic" socialism, but the example of Bolshevik policy has proved suitable for quite a number of countries.

If our attitude towards the Constituent Assembly was criminal in the eyes of the Mensheviks, is it not enough to remember that it is not three weeks since the revolution in Germany, yet they are already debating the subject of a Constituent Assembly or Soviets? Whether they like it or not, it turns out that we were right. That is why we are observing a turn of sentiment in our direction among the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries. Our policy proved, internationally, to be the most convincing of examples, and overcame very deep-rooted prejudices. That is why we say that we have very hard facts to back us. That is why we can take advantage of this change of attitude and influence them by example, firmly remembering that if in the matter of patriotism over the struggle for parliamentary institutions we have won in so short a time, we may be all the more certain that we shall win in the other sphere, too, and the agitation of these elements no longer holds out any terrors for us. And when they say they want to be neutral and live on neighbourly terms with us, we shall reply: "That is just what we want. We never expected you to become Communists."

We continue to stand for the ruthless expropriation of the landlords and capitalists. Here we are ruthless, and we cannot agree to any conciliation or compromise in this field—this would be a betrayal of the middle peasants, the petty-bourgeois democracy. And that is one of the forms of struggle envisaged by the theoreticians of communism, a form that follows from the fact that no decrees will be of any avail in converting small-scale into large-scale production, that this involves gradually laying the foundation of the socialist society and, developing, by the course of events, the inevitability of socialism. These people will never become Socialists by conviction, real and authentic Socialists.

They will become Socialists when they see that there is no other way. They can now see that Europe has been so thoroughly shattered and imperialism has reached such a pitch that no bourgeois democracy can save the situation, that only a Soviet system can do that. That is why this neutrality, this neighbourly attitude of the petty-bourgeois democracy, far from holding out any terrors for us, is now actually to be welcomed. That is why, if we do not regard the matter as propagandists of communism, but as the representatives of a class which is exercising its dictatorship, we must say that we never counted on anything more, that in relation to the petty-bourgeois democracy it is quite enough. You maintain neighbourly relations with us, and we will keep the state power. After your declaration in regard to the Entente and so on, we are quite willing to legalise you, Messrs. the Mensheviks: the Central Committee will do that on the decision of our party. But we shall not forget that there are still activists in your party, and with regard to them our methods of struggle will remain unchanged; for the activists are friends of the Czechoslovaks, and until the Czechoslovaks have been driven out of Russia, you are our enemies too. We reserve the power of state for ourselves, and for ourselves only. With regard to those who adopt an attitude of neutrality towards us, we shall act as a class which holds the political power and directs the whole edge of its weapon against the landlords and the capitalists, and which says to the petty-bourgeois democracy: if you choose to go over to the Czechoslovaks and Krasnovs, well, we have shown you that we can fight, and we will fight. But if you choose to learn from the example of the Bolsheviks, we will enter into agreement with you, knowing that without a whole series of agreements—which we will try out, examine and compare together with you—the country cannot pass to socialism.

This is the path we took from the very beginning, for example, by passing the law on the socialisation of the land and changing it only gradually into the measure that enabled us to unite the poor peasants around us and turn them against the kulaks. Only as the proletarian movement succeeds in the countryside—not the movement against the landlords in general, but against the kulaks—only as that movement succeeds, will we systematically pass to collective, common possession of the land and to its common cultivation. This could not be done except with the backing of a purely proletarian movement in the countryside, and in this respect a great deal still remains to be done.

There can be no doubt that only practical application, only realities will show us how to act here.

To reach agreement with the middle peasantry is one thing, with the petty-bourgeois elements another, and with the cooperators another still. The task will be modified in relation to those bourgeois associations which preserve their petty-bourgeois traditions and habits. It will be still further modified in relation to the petty-bourgeois intellectuals-they vacillate, but we need them, too, for our socialist revolution. We know that socialism can be built only from the elements of big-capitalist culture, and the intelligentsia is one of these elements. We had to fight it ruthlessly, but it was not communism that compelled us to do so but that course of events which repelled from us all democrats and all who are in love with bourgeois democracy. Now the opportunity has come to utilise the intelligentsia for the benefit of socialism, the intelligentsia which is not socialistic, which will never be communistic, but which the objective course of events and relations is now inducing to adopt a neutral and neighbourly attitude towards us. "We shall never rely on you petty intellectuals," we say, "but only on the vanguard of the proletariat that leads all the proletarians and all the poor peasants." The party of the Communists can rely on no other support. But it is one thing to rely on the class which embodies the dictatorship, and another to dominate over other classes. There is a great difference here, of course, as I have attempted to show.

You will remember that Engels said even of the peasants who employ hired labour: "Perhaps it will not be necessary to expropriate them all." 14. We are expropriating according to the general rule, and we will have no kulaks; we are crushing them. We suppress them physically when they worm their way into the Soviets and from there try to choke the poor peasants. You see how the domination of one class is exercised here. Only the proletariat may dominate. But this is applied in one way to the small peasant, in another to the middle peasant, in another to the landlord, and in another still to the petty-bourgeois. The whole point is for us to understand this change of attitude brought about by international conditions, to understand that it is inevitable that slogans we got accustomed to during the past six months of the revolution's history should be modified as far as the petty-bourgeois democracy is concerned. We must say that we reserve the power for the same class, while in relation to the petty-bourgeois

democracy our slogan was one of agreement; but we were driven to resort to terror.

Our task in relation to the petty-bourgeois democracy is systematically to test and try out their policy in the case of each individual, to test the forces of the petty-bourgeois democracy in a way conformable with neighbourly relations and agreement, under which the proletariat says: "Our line leads to communism through expropriation; if you cooperators and intellectuals are really anxious to maintain neighbourly relations with us, then be good enough to perform the tasks we assign you. If you do not, you will be law-breakers and our enemies, and we will fight you. But if you maintain neighbourly relations and perform these tasks, that will be more than enough for us. Our support is secure. That you are flabby we never doubted. But that we need you we do not deny, for hitherto you have been the only cultured group."

If we did not have to build socialism with the elements we have inherited from capitalism, our task would be an easy one; but that is the whole difficulty of socialist construction—that we have to build socialism with people who have been spoiled through and through by capitalism. That is the whole difficulty of the transition—that it is associated with a dictatorship, with leadership by a single class—the proletariat. That is why we say that the line will be determined by the proletariat, which has been schooled and moulded into a fighting force capable of smashing the bourgeoisie. Between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat stand innumerable transitional degrees, and in relation to them our policy must now take the lines which were envisaged by our theory, and which we are now in a position to follow in practice. We shall have to settle a number of problems, to conclude a number of agreements; we shall have to test agreements and technical assignments which we, as the ruling proletarian power, must know how to set. We must know how to set the middle peasant one assignmentto assist in commodity exchange, and in exposing the kulak-and the co-operators another—they have the machinery for the distribution of products on a mass scale, and we must take over that machinery. We have to build socialism with the remnants of the co-operative machinery left over from the past and must be able to compel the surviving ruling class to carry out and perform these assignments. As to the intellectuals, they must be set quite different assignments. They are no longer able to continue their sabotage, and their attitude towards us is now most neighbourly; we must make use of these intellectuals, set them definite tasks and keep an eye and check on the way they perform them; we must treat them in the way Marx said when speaking of the office workers of the time of the Paris Commune: Every employer knows how to select suitable assistants, bookkeepers, and if they make mistakes, to correct them, and if they are unsuitable, to replace them by better ones. 18

We are building our state out of the elements left over by capitalism. We cannot build it if we do not utilise such a heritage of capitalist culture as the intelligentsia. When events drove us to fight, we retaliated in accordance with the rule; three tricks for every one. But now our whole purpose must be to treat the petty bourgeoisie as a good neighbour who is under the strict control of the state power. The task of the class-conscious proletariat here is to understand that its rule does not mean carrying out all these tasks itself. Whoever thinks that has not the slightest inkling of socialist construction and has learnt nothing from a year of revolution and dictatorship. People like that had better go to school and learn something. But those who have learnt something during this period will say: "These intellectuals are the people I am now going to use in the work of construction. For I have a strong enough support in the peasantry to do it, and a position in international affairs which comes from a year of struggle and from the sacrifices we bore in connection with the Brest-Litovsk Peace and politics." We bore those sacrifices in order to demonstrate the correctness of our policy. And we must remember that only in the course of that struggle, in the course of a number of agreements and trial agreements between the proletariat and the petty-bourgeois democracy, can we work out that form of construction which will lead to socialism.

Remember that Engels said that we must act by force of example. No form will be final until complete communism has been achieved. We never claimed to know the exact road. But we are moving towards communism inevitably and infallibly; and that we can determine in every particular instance, provided of course we do not keep switching from one thing to another. In times like these every week is worth more than decades in times of peace. The six months that have elapsed since the Brest-Litovsk Peace have been marked by a swing away from us. The West-European revolution—a revolution which followed our example—should strengthen us. We must take account of the changes

that have taken place, we must take account of every element, and must not cherish any illusions, for we know that the waverers will remain waverers until the world socialist revolution is completely triumphant. That may not be so soon, although the course of events in the German revolution leads us to hope that it may be sooner than many anticipate. The German revolution is developing in the same way as ours, but at a faster pace. In any case, our task now is to wage a desperate struggle against British and American imperialism, which, just because it feels that Bolshevism has become a world force, is trying to throttle us as fast as possible, desiring to settle with the Russian Bolsheviks first, and then tackle its own.

We must make use of those wavering elements whom the atrocities of imperialism are driving towards us. And we will make use of them. You know that in time of war no aid, however indirect, is to be scorned. In time of war even the position of the wavering classes is of immense significance. The fiercer the war, the more we need to win influence over the wavering elements who are beginning to turn in our direction. Hence it follows that the tactics we have been pursuing for six months must be modified to suit the new tasks in relation to the various sections of the petty-bourgeois democracy.

If I have succeeded in directing the attention of party workers to this problem and in inducing them to seek for a correct solution by means of systematic experiment, I may consider that my task has been accomplished.

#### REPLY TO THE DISCUSSION

Comrades, it is necessary that I make a few remarks in reply to the discussion. First of all, I would like to reply to the question of dogma which was raised here. Marx and Engels repeatedly said that our teaching is not a dogma, but a guide to action, and I think that is what we should bear in mind most.

The teaching of Marx and Engels is not a dogma to be learnt by heart. It must be accepted as a guide to action. That is what we have always said, and I think we have acted accordingly. While never succumbing to opportunism, we have modified our tactics when necessary. But that is no departure from the teaching, and certainly cannot be called opportunism. I have said before, and I once more repeat, that this teaching is not a dogma, but a guide to action.

Passing next to the remark of Comrade Steklov-with whom are we to make the agreement, with the general staffs or the masses?—my reply is: in the first place, of course, with the masses, and then with the general staffs; and when it comes to fighting the general staffs, all will depend on the particular circumstances. I shall come to that, but just now I see no practical possibility of an agreement with the Menshevik and the Socialist-Revolutionary parties. \* We are told: "Agreement means ceding something. What do you intend to cede? Are you going to depart from the basic line? That would be renegacy. But if it is to apply only to practice, there is nothing new in it." Naturally, we shall never cede our principles. There is no need to talk about that now. There was a controversy over the basic line and principles fif-teen years ago; unfortunately, I myself was obliged to carry on this controversy mostly abroad, not in Russia. But now it is the question of state power that is at issue, and there simply cannot be any question of ceding anything here. It was not without reason that Wilson declared: "Our enemy now is world Bolshevism." That is what the bourgeois all over the world are saying. The fact that they are preparing to launch a war against us means that they recognise that the Bolshevik government is not only a Russian but a world phenomenon. He would be a sorry Bolshevik who offered any kind of agreement to the bourgeoisie. And, anyhow, now that the fires of revolution have spread to so many countries, no capitalist bourgeois government will consent to it, or can consent to it.

The Swiss bourgeoisie, when the recent events occurred, said outright: "We are not the Russians, we won't surrender power." Captain Sadoul, who has now sided with Bolshevism, writes that he is surprised at the astonishing docility of the Russian bourgeoisie, and declares that that is not the way the French bourgeoisie will act. There the struggle will be far more bitter, and the civil war, if it should break out, will assume the most ruthless forms. Of this there can be no question.

Practically, the matter has been fully decided by the year of proletarian dictatorship, and no peasant or worker would think of trying to reach agreement with the bourgeoisie. And as to agreement being nothing new, I fully agree. I only wanted all of us to confer on these questions.

<sup>•</sup> Several lines following this passage in the stenographic report are undecipherable.— Ed.

The circumstances which most repelled the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries and the lower intelligentsia from us, namely, the relentless struggle for the Brest-Litovsk Peace during the advance of German imperialism, are now a thing of the past. But we know perfectly well that any success, however transient, the British and French may have, will give rise to new vacillations on the part of this intelligentsia and petty democracy, and they will begin to spread panic and desert to the other side. We are forming an agreement with them to achieve definite results and for definite practical work. These tactics should present no cause either for controversy or surprise. But many have shown that they do not understand, even such an influential memher of the Moscow Soviet as Comrade Maximov, Comrade Maximov said that we do not have to form an agreement with Khinchuk, but only come to a sensible understanding with him. When we issued the first decree on the cooperative societies in the spring, and they presented us with an ultimatum, we yielded to them. That is agreementthere is no other name for this policy. And if every Soviet official makes it a rule, says to himself and to all his comrades that we must come to a sensible understanding with the petty-bourgeois democracy, I shall consider myself satisfied.

In our work, especially in our work in the localities, we are still a long way from approaching a sensible understanding. We all too frequently do not discuss matters sensibly. This is thrown in our faces by people who do not understand that this is bound to happen in the building of a new society. There is no genius who could build a new way of life without having learnt how to build. When it is necessary to come to sensible terms with practical men of affairs, we are no good at it. In order to run a shop, one must know how to run it. We need people who know their business. We Bolsheviks had very little occasion to apply our talents to practical affairs of this kind. We very rarely experience a shortage of propagandists, but our most crying shortage is the shortage of practical leaders, of organisers. And that is the case to this day, in spite of the year's experience we have behind us. Come to a sensible understanding with every man who has enough experience in this sphere and who makes neutrality and neighbourly relations his maxim. If he knows how to run a shop and distribute goods, if he can teach us anything, if he is a man of practice, he will be a great attribute.

Everybody knows that amidst the friends of the Bolsheviks, ever

since their triumph, there are many enemies, many enemies in their own ranks. Very often absolutely unreliable and fraudulent elements worm their way into our midst, elements that are politically unstable, who sell out, deceive us and betray us. We are perfectly aware of that, but it does not alter our purpose. It is historically inevitable. When the Mensheviks point out the fact that among the Soviet employees there are many alien elements, people who are dishonest even in the ordinary sense, we say: where are we to get better people; what must we do to make the best and finest people believe in us at once? No revolution can triumph and convince at once, can make people believe in it at once. A revolution begins in one country, while in other countries people do not believe in it. Our revolution is considered a frightful chaos, and in some countries they do not expect anything to come of our organised "chaotic" assemblies, which we call Soviets. And that is quite natural. There were many things we had to fight for. And when it is said that we must come to a sensible understanding with Khinchuk, because he knows how to run shops, I say: Come to an understanding with others too; make use of the petty bourgeois, they are good at many things.

If we drive this slogan, "come to an understanding," into the heads of the people in the localities, if we realise that a new class is awakening to power, that people are setting about the work of government who have never tackled such a complicated job before, and are naturally making mistakes, we shall not be dismayed. We know that to govern without making mistakes is impossible. But, besides making mistakes, people are using the power crudely, as nothing but power, as though to say: "I have the power, I have given my orders, it is for you to obey." But we say, this is not the slogan to follow with quite a number of elements—the petty-bourgeois democracy in the trade unions, among the peasants, and in the cooperatives—for it is becoming unnecessary. It is therefore more sensible to come to an understanding with the petty-bourgeois democracy, especially the intelligentsia—that is our task now. Of course, when coming to such understandings we shall do so on our platform, we shall do it as the government power.

We ask: Is it true that you have abandoned hostility for neutrality and neighbourly relations? Is it true that you have ceased to be hostile? If not, we shall not close our eyes to the fact and shall frankly say: If you want war, you'll have it. And we shall act as one does in war.

But if you have abandoned your hostility for neutrality, if you really want neighbourly relations—I have taken these words from statements by people who do not belong to the Communist camp, who until quite recently were much closer to the White Guard camp—I say that since there are such numbers of people who are abandoning their former hostility for neutrality and neighbourly relations, we must continue our propaganda.

Comrade Khmelnitsky need have no fear that the Mensheviks will carry on their own propaganda and try to direct the life of the working class. We are not talking about the Social-Democrats, who have not understood the socialist republic, nor the petty-bourgeois bureaucrats; here we have to wage an ideological struggle, a relentless war, against Menshevism. You cannot offer a Menshevik a deeper insult than to call him a petty-bourgeois democrat; and the more calmly you try to prove it to him, the more furious he will get. To think that we will surrender a hundredth or even a thousandth part of the position we have won is a mistake. We will not surrender one jot.

The examples quoted by Comrade Schmidt show that even among the group of the proletariat which stood closest to the bourgeoisie, as, for example, the printers, the petty-bourgeois clerks, the bourgeois bank officials who used to perform the commercial operations in the business and industrial firms, and who have a lot to lose from the transition to socialism—we have closed down a great many bourgeois papers, we have nationalised the banks, we have closed a number of channels through which the bank officials used to make money by sharing in profiteering—even in this camp we see them wavering, we find them coming over to us. If Khinchuk is valuable because he knows how to run shops, the bank official is valuable because he knows the technique of the money business, with which many of us may have a theoretical acquaintance, but in the practical side of which we are very weak. And I say that with a man who knows the technique of this business and who tells me that he has abandoned his former hostility for neutrality and good-neighbourliness-with every such man, we say, we must come to a sensible understanding. And if in the Soviets Comrade Maximov, as a prominent member of the Presidium of the Moscow Soviet. pursues the tactics he spoke of in relation to the intelligentsia and the vacillating petty bourgeoisie, I shall be more than satisfied.

Next, the question of the cooperative societies. Comrade Steklov said that the cooperatives smell. Comrade Maximov said in discussing

them that it is a mistake to pass decrees like the last one the Council of People's Commissars passed. On the practical side opinions differed. It is nothing new to us that we must come to an agreement with the petty bourgeoisie on such a footing if it is not hostile to us. If the old stand is no good, it should be revised when changed circumstances demand it. And that things have changed in this respect is quite clear. The cooperative societies are a striking example. The cooperative machinery is a machinery of supply based, not on the private initiative of capitalists, but on the mass participation of the working people themselves, and Kautsky was right when he said, long before he became a renegade, that socialist society is one big cooperative.

If we are out to establish control and to organise business, practically, in the interests of hundreds of thousands of people, we must not forget that when Socialists discuss this question they point out that directors of trusts, as experienced practical men, may be useful to them. Today experience shows that the petty-bourgeois elements have abandoned hostility for neutrality. And we must also realise that they do know how to run shops. We do not deny that Khinchuk as an ideologist is thoroughly steeped in bourgeois prejudices; they all simply reek of them. But at the same time, they have the practical knowledge. As far as ideas are concerned, all the guns are on our side, and not a single one on theirs. But when they say that they are not hostile and intend to be neutral, we must bear in mind that now hundreds and thousands of people less capable than Khinchuk are also willing to come to a sensible understanding. I say that we must know how to come to terms with them. In the sphere of practical affairs they know more than we do and are more proficient, and we must learn from them. Let them learn from us how to influence the international proletariat; but as to running shops, we will learn from them. That is something we do not know. Technicians with special knowledge are needed in every field.

And as regards the cooperative societies, I do not understand why you say they smell. When drafting the first decree on the cooperative societies we invited to a discussion in the Council of People's Commissars people who not only were not Communists, but actually stood much closer to the White Guards. We conferred with them and asked them: Can you accept this point? They replied: this we can, but that we cannot. Of course, looked at offhand, superficially, this was compromising with the bourgeoisie. For, after all, it was representatives

of bourgeois cooperative societies that were invited, and it was at their request that several clauses were deleted from the decree. For example, we deleted a clause providing that there should be no entrance fees or dues in the proletarian cooperative societies. To us that seemed quite all right, but they rejected our proposal.

We say that we must come to terms with people who know how to run shops much better than we do; it is a business we do not know. But we will not swerve one inch from the lines of our struggle. When we issued another decree of the same tenor, Comrade Maximov said that such decrees were wrong, because the decree says that the cooperative societies which were closed down are to be reopened. This shows that in the Moscow Soviet, as among ourselves, there are certain misapprehensions, and if only for the sake of removing such misapprehensions, conferences and discussions like ours here today should be arranged.

We said that in the interests of our work we intended to utilise not only the trade unions in general, but even the Union of Commercial and Industrial Employees, and, you know, the commercial and industrial employees have always been a mainstay of the bourgeois system. But as these people have come to us and say that they are willing to live on neighbourly terms with us, we must welcome them with open arms, and accept the hand they proffer—your own will not drop off. We do not forget that if the British and French imperialists were to strike tomorrow, they would be the first to turn tail and run away. But Comrade Skrypnik need not be alarmed on that score; he will not be weakened by it one bit. But so long as this party, these bourgeois elements, do not run away, we repeat that we must have closer relations with them. That is why we adopted the decree published on Sunday, which is not to Comrade Maximov's liking-which shows that he clings to the old Communist tactics, tactics which are inapplicable to the new conditions. We drew up that decree the other day, and in reply received the resolution of the Central Committee of the Employees' Union, and it would be foolish to say we are issuing decrees at the wrong time. What is the point of issuing these decrees now when the change of front has begun and the situation is changing.

The armed capitalists are continuing the war with greater stubbornness than ever, and it is frightfully important for our work of practical construction to take advantage of this change of attitude, even if it is

only temporary. The whole power is in our hands. We need not close down cooperative societies, and we can reopen those that have been closed down, for we closed them down when they served the ends of White Guard propaganda. Every slogan has the faculty of becoming more rigid than is necessary. When the wave of closing down and persecuting the cooperative societies swept over Russia, it was the conditions of the time that made it necessary. But now it is no longer necessary. They are a highly important piece of machinery and are connected with the middle peasantry; they unite the disunited and scattered sections of the peasantry—and they cannot seriously interfere in politics or affairs of state. These Khinchuks are doing a useful job, which was started by bourgeois elements. When these peasants and petty-bourgeois democrats say that they are abandoning hostility for neutrality, for neighbourly relations, we should say to them: "That is just what we want. And now, good neighbours, let us come to a sensible understanding. We shall assist you in every way and allow you your rights; we shall examine your claims and grant you certain privileges; but you must carry out the jobs we assign you. If you do not, remember that the whole apparatus of the Extraordinary Commission is in our hands. If you are unable to make proper use of your rights and do not carry out our assignments, we have the whole apparatus of state control in our hands, and we shall regard you as violators of the will of the state. You must render us account down to the last farthing, and any violation will be punished as a violation of the will of the state and of its laws."

This entire system of control remains in our hands; but just now the task of winning over these people, if only for a time, although it may not be a gigantic one from the standpoint of world politics, is for us one of urgent necessity. It will strengthen our position in the war. We have no decently organised rear. It will give us a moral victory, for it will show the West-European imperialists that they can expect to meet pretty serious resistance from us. And that is not to be scoffed at, for inside every country there is a working class, proletarian opposition to the attack on Russia. That is why I think, as far as one can judge from Comrade Maximov's statement, that we are groping our way to a definite agreement. Even if differences are disclosed, they are not so important, for once we recognise the necessity of coming to a sensible understanding with the entire petty-bourgeois democracy, with the intelligentsia, the cooperators and the trade unions which still

do not recognise us, while at the same time never allowing the power to slip from our hands—if we firmly adhere to this policy all through the winter, we shall secure a great advantage for the whole cause of international revolution.

Speech at meeting of Moscow functionaries of the Communist Party, November 27, 1918.

# The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky

## THE PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION AND THE RENEGADE KAUTSKY

#### PREFACE

KAUTSKY'S pamphlet, *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat*, recently published in Vienna (Wien, 1918, Ignaz Brand, 63 pp.) is a very striking example of that complete and ignominious bankruptcy of the Second International which all honest Socialists in all countries have been talking about for a long time. The proletarian revolution is now becoming a practical issue in a number of countries, and an examination of Kautsky's renegade sophistries and complete abjuration of Marxism is therefore essential.

First of all, however, it is important to point out that the present writer has had numerous occasions, from the very beginning of the war, to refer to Kautsky's rupture with Marxism. A number of articles published in the course of 1914-16 in the Sotsial-Demokrat and the Kommunist, issued abroad, dealt with this subject. These articles were afterwards collected and published by the Petrograd Soviet under the title Against the Stream, by G. Zinoviev and N. Lenin (Petrograd, 1918, 550 pp.).

In a pamphlet published in Geneva in 1915 and simultaneously translated into German and French I wrote about "Kautskyism" as follows:

"Kautsky, the greatest authority of the Second International, represents the most typical and striking example of how lip service to Marxism has in reality led to its transformation into 'Struveism' or 'Brentanoism' (that is, into a liberal bourgeois doctrine, which recognises a non-revolutionary 'class' struggle of the proletariat, most strikingly expressed by the Russian

<sup>•</sup> Newspaper first published in Paris in 1908, in 1910 becoming the official organ of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party. From 1911 to 1917 it was a Bolshevik organ, one of whose editors was Lenin.—Ed.

writer Struve and the German economist Brentano\*). Plekhanov is a similar example. Those people castrate Marxism; they purge it, by means of obvious sophisms, of its revolutionary living soul; they recognise in Marxism everything except revolutionary means of struggle, except the advocacy of, and the preparation for, such struggle, and the education of the masses in this direction. Kautsky quite meaninglessly 'reconciles' the fundamental idea of social-chauvinism, the defence of the fatherland in this war, with a diplomatic sham concession to the Left, such as abstaining from voting appropriations, verbal expression of opposition, etc. Kautsky, who in 1909 wrote a book † predicting the approach of a revolutionary period and discussing the relation between war and revolution, Kautsky, who in 1912 signed the Basle Manifesto on revolutionary utilisation of the coming war, now justifies and embellishes social-chauvinism in every way. Like Plekhanov, he joins the bourgeoisie in ridiculing the very idea of revolution, in repudiating every step towards immediate revolutionary struggle.

"The working class cannot realise its revolutionary role, which is of world significance, otherwise than by waging a merciless war against this desertion of principles, this supineness, this servility to opportunism and this unexampled theoretical vulgarisation of Marxism. Kautskyism is not an accident but a social product of the contradictions within the Second International which combined faithfulness to Marxism in words with submission to opportunism in deeds." ‡

Again in my book, Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism § which was written in 1916 and published in Petrograd in 1917, I examined in detail the theoretical fallacy of all Kautsky's arguments about imperialism. I quoted Kautsky's definition of imperialism: "Imperialism is a product of highly developed industrial capitalism. It consists in the striving of every industrial capitalist nation to bring under its control or to annex increasingly big agrarian [Kautsky's italics] regions irrespective of what nations inhabit those regions." I showed how utterly incorrect this definition was, and how it was "adapted" to the glossing over of the most profound contradictions of imperialism, and then to reconciliation with opportunism. I gave my own definition of imperialism:

<sup>\*</sup> Peter Struve, early Socialist publicist, later renegade; Professor Luigi Brentano, while recognising the progressive character of capitalism as against feudalism, did not accept Marxism.—Ed.

<sup>†</sup> Der Weg zur Macht (The Road to Power).-Ed.

<sup>‡</sup> See V. I. Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. XVIII, pp. 215-258 (International Publishers, N. Y.).—Ed.

<sup>§ 1</sup>bid., Vol. XIX (International Publishers, N. Y.), pp. 83-198.—Ed.

"Imperialism is capitalism in that stage of development in which the dominance of monopolies and finance capital has established itself; in which the export of capital has acquired pronounced importance; in which the division of the world among the international trusts has begun; in which the division of all territories of the globe among the great capitalist powers has been completed."

I showed that Kautsky's critique of imperialism is at an even lower level than the bourgeois, philistine critique.

Finally, in August and September 1917—that is, before the proletarian revolution in Russia (October 25 [November 7], 1917)—I wrote a brochure (published in Petrograd at the beginning of 1918) entitled The State and Revolution: The Marxist Doctrine of the State and the Tasks of the Proletariat in the Revolution.\* In Chapter VI of this book, entitled "The Vulgarisation of Marxism by the Opportunists," I devoted special attention to Kautsky, showing that he had completely distorted Marx's doctrine, opportunistically falsifying it, and that he had "repudiated the revolution in deeds, while accepting it in words."

In substance, the chief theoretical mistake Kautsky makes in his pamphlet on the dictatorship of the proletariat is precisely those opportunist distortions of Marx's doctrine of the state which I have exposed in detail in my pamphlet, *The State and Revolution*.

It was necessary to make these preliminary observations for they show that I had openly accused Kautsky of being a renegade *long before* the Bolsheviks assumed state power and were condemned by him on that account.

### HOW KAUTSKY TRANSFORMED MARX INTO A COMMON OR GARDEN VARIETY LIBERAL

The fundamental question that Kautsky touches upon in his pamphlet is the question of the root content of the proletarian revolution, namely, the dictatorship of the proletariat. This is a question that is of the greatest importance for all countries, especially for the advanced ones, especially for the belligerent countries, and especially at the present time. One may say without fear of exaggeration that this is the most important problem of the entire proletarian class struggle. Hence it is necessary to deal with it with particular attention.

See V. I. Lenin, State and Revolution (International Publishers, New York) .-- Ed.

Kautsky formulates the question as follows: "The antithesis between the two Socialist trends" (i.e., the Bolsheviks and the non-Bolsheviks) is "the antithesis between two radically different methods: the democratic and the dictatorial" (p. 3).

Let us point out, in passing, that by calling the non-Bolsheviks in Russia, *i.e.*, the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, Socialists, Kautsky was guided by their appellation, that is, by a word, and not by the *actual place* they occupy in the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. What an excellent interpretation and application of Marxism! But of this more anon.

At present we must deal with the main point, viz., with Kautsky's great discovery of the "fundamental antithesis" between the "democratic and dictatorial methods." That is the crux of the matter; that is the essence of Kautsky's pamphlet. And it is such a monstrous theoretical muddle, such a complete renunciation of Marxism, that Kautsky, it must be confessed, has far excelled Bernstein.

The question of the dictatorship of the proletariat is a question of the relation between the proletarian state and the bourgeois state, between proletarian democracy and bourgeois democracy. One would think that this was as plain as noonday. But Kautsky, like a school-master who has become as dry as dust from repeating the same old historical textbooks, persistently turns his back on the twentieth century and his face to the eighteenth century, and for the hundredth time, in a number of paragraphs, tediously chews the cud over the relation between bourgeois democracy and absolutism and mediævalism.

It is positively like chewing rags in one's sleep!

What a lack of understanding of the fitness of things! One cannot help smiling at Kautsky's efforts to make it appear that there are people who preach "contempt for democracy" (p. 11), and so forth. It is by such twaddle that Kautsky has to gloss over and confuse the question at issue, for he formulates it in the manner of the liberals, speaks about democracy in general, and not of bourgeois democracy; he even avoids using this precise, class term, and, instead, tries to speak about "pre-Socialist" democracy. This windbag devotes almost a third of his pamphlet, twenty pages out of a total of sixty-three, to this twaddle, which is so agreeable to the bourgeoisie, for it is tantamount to embellishing bourgeois democracy, and obscures the question of the proletarian revolution.

But, after all, the title of Kautsky's pamphlet is *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat*. Everybody knows that this is the essence of Marx's doctrine; and after a lot of irrelevant twaddle Kautsky was obliged to quote Marx's words on the dictatorship of the proletariat.

But the way in which he, the "Marxist," did so was simply farcical. Listen to this:

"This view" (which Kautsky dubs "contempt for democracy") "rests upon a single word of Karl Marx's." This is what Kautsky literally says on page 20. And on page 60 the same thing is even repeated in the form that they (the Bolsheviks) "opportunely recalled the little word" (that is literally what he says—des Wörtchens!!) "about the dictatorship of the proletariat which Karl Marx once used in 1875 in a letter."

Here is Marx's "little word":

"Between capitalist and communist society lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. There corresponds to this also a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat." 17

First of all, to call this celebrated argument of Marx's, which sums up the whole of his revolutionary teaching, "a single word" and even a "little word," is an insult to and complete renunciation of Marxism. It must not be forgotten that Kautsky knows Marx almost by heart, and, judging by all he has written, he has in his desk, or in his head, a number of pigeonholes in which all that was ever written by Marx is carefully filed so as to be ready at hand for quotation. Kautsky cannot but know that both Marx and Engels, in their letters as well as in their published works, repeatedly spoke about the dictatorship of the proletariat, especially both before and after the Paris Commune. Kautsky cannot but know that the formula "dictatorship of the proletariat" is but a more historically concrete and more scientifically exact formulation of the proletariat's task of "smashing" the bourgeois state machine, about which Marx and Engels, in summing up the experience of the Revolution of 1848, and, still more so, of 1871, spoke for forty years, between 1852 and 1891.\*

How is this monstrous distortion of Marxism by that erudite Marxist, Kautsky, to be explained? As far as the philosophical roots of this

<sup>\*</sup> See V. I. Lenin, State and Revolution, for a full discussion of the subject.—Ed.

phenomenon are concerned, it amounts to the substitution of eclecticism and sophistry for dialectics. Kautsky is a past master in this sort of substitution. Regarded from the standpoint of practical politics, it amounts to subserviency to the opportunists, that is, in the long run, to the bourgeoisie.

Since the outbreak of the war, Kautsky has made increasingly rapid progress in this art of being a Marxist in words and a lackey of the bourgeoisie in deeds, until he has attained virtuosity in it.

One becomes still more convinced of this when one examines the remarkable way in which Kautsky "interprets" Marx's "little word," the dictatorship of the proletariat. Listen:

"Marx, unfortunately, neglected to show us more precisely how he conceived this dictatorship." (This is the utterly mendacious phrase of a renegade, for Marx and Engels gave us quite a number of most precise indications, which Kautsky the erudite Marxist has deliberately ignored.) "Literally, the word dictatorship means the abolition of democracy. But, of course, taken literally, this word also means the undivided rule of a single individual unrestricted by any laws—an autocracy, which differs from despotism only in the fact that it is not regarded as a permanent state institution, but as a transitory emergency measure.

"The term, 'dictatorship of the proletariat,' hence, not the dictatorship of a single individual, but of a class, *ipso facto* precludes the possibility that Marx in this connection had in mind a dictatorship in the literal sense of the term.

"He speaks here not of a form of governing, but of a condition, which must necessarily arise wherever the proletariat has captured political power. That Marx did not have in mind a form of governing is proved by the fact that he was of the opinion that in England and America the transition might take place peacefully, i.e., in a democratic way." (p. 20).

I have deliberately quoted this argument in full in order that the reader may clearly see the method employed by Kautsky the "theoretician."

Kautsky chose to approach the question in such a way as to begin with a definition of the "word" dictatorship.

Very well. Everyone has a sacred right to approach a question in whatever way he pleases. One must only distinguish a serious and honest approach from a dishonest one. Anyone who wanted to be serious in approaching this question in this way ought to have given his own definition of the "word." Then the question would have been

put fairly and squarely. But Kautsky does not do that. "Literally," he writes, "the word dictatorship means the abolition of democracy."

In the first place, this is not a definition. If Kautsky wanted to avoid giving a definition of the concept dictatorship, why did he choose this particular approach to the question?

Secondly, it is obviously wrong. A liberal naturally speaks of "democracy" in general; but a Marxist will never forget to ask: "for what class?" Everyone knows, for instance (and Kautsky the "historian" knows it too), that rebellions, or even strong ferment, among the slaves in antiquity at once revealed the fact that the state of antiquity was essentially a dictatorship of the slave-owners. Did this dictatorship abolish democracy among, and for, the slave-owners? Everybody knows that it did not.

Kautsky the "Marxist" said this monstrously absurd and untrue thing because he "forgot" the class struggle....

In order to transform Kautsky's liberal and lying assertion into a Marxian and true one, one must say: Dictatorship does not necessarily mean the abolition of democracy for the class that exercises the dictatorship over the other classes; but it certainly does mean the abolition (or very material restriction, which is also a form of abolition) of democracy for the class over which, or against which, the dictatorship is exercised.

But, however true this assertion may be, it does not give a definition of dictatorship.

Let us examine Kautsky's next sentence: "But, of course, taken literally, this word also means the undivided rule of a single individual unrestricted by any laws."

Like a blind puppy casually sniffing first in one direction and then in another, Kautsky accidentally stumbled upon one true idea (namely, that dictatorship is rule unrestricted by any laws); nevertheless, he failed to give a definition of dictatorship, and, moreover, he gave vent to an obvious historical falsehood, viz., that dictatorship means the rule of a single person. This is even grammatically incorrect, since dictatorship may also be exercised by a handful of persons, or by an oligarchy, or by a class, etc.

Kautsky then goes on to point out the difference between dictatorship and despotism, but, although what he says is obviously incorrect, we shall not dwell upon it, as it is wholly irrelevant to the question that interests us. Everyone knows Kautsky's propensity to turn from

the twentieth century to the eighteenth, and from the eighteenth century to classical antiquity, and I hope that the German proletariat, after it has established its dictatorship, will bear this propensity of his in mind and appoint him, say, teacher of ancient history at some high school. To try to evade a definition of the dictatorship of the proletariat by philosophising about despotism is either crass stupidity or very clumsy trickery.

As a result, we find that, having undertaken to discuss the dictatorship, Kautsky rattled off a great deal that is obviously untrue, but has not given a definition! Yet, without trusting to his mental faculties, he might have had recourse to his memory and extracted from his "pigeonholes" all those instances in which Marx speaks of dictatorship. Had he done so, he would certainly have arrived either at the following definition or at one in the main coinciding with it:

Dictatorship is rule based directly upon force and unrestricted by any laws.

The revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat is rule won and maintained by the use of violence by the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, rule that is unrestricted by any laws.

And this simple truth, a truth that is as plain as noonday to every class conscious worker (representing the masses, and not an upper stratum of petty-bourgeois scoundrels who have been bribed by the capitalists, such as are the social-imperialists of all countries), this truth, which is obvious to every representative of the exploited classes that are fighting for their emancipation, this truth, which is indisputable for every Marxist, has to be "extorted by main force" from the most learned Mr. Kautsky. How is it to be explained? Simply by that spirit of servility with which the leaders of the Second International, who have become contemptible sycophants in the service of the bourgeoisie, have become imbued.

Kautsky first committed a subterfuge by proclaiming the obvious nonsense that the word dictatorship, in its literal sense, means the dictatorship of a single person, and then, on the strength of this subterfuge, he declared that Marx's words about the dictatorship of a class were not *meant* in the literal sense (but must be taken to mean that dictatorship does not imply revolutionary violence, but "the peaceful winning of a majority under bourgeois"—mark you—democracy).

One must, if you please, distinguish between a "condition" and a

"form of governing"! A wonderfully profound distinction; it is like drawing a distinction between the stupid "condition" of a man who reasons foolishly and the "form" of his stupidity!

Kautsky finds it necessary to interpret dictatorship as a "condition of rule" (this is the literal expression he uses on the very next page, p. 21), because then revolutionary violence and violent revolution disappear. The "condition of ruler" is a condition in which any majority finds itself under . . . "democracy." Thanks to such a fraudulent trick, revolution happily disappears.

But the trick is too crude and will not save Kautsky. One cannot do away with the fact that dictatorship presupposes and implies a "condition," one which is so disagreeable to all renegades of revolutionary violence of one class against another. The absurdity of drawing a distinction between a "condition" and a "form of government" becomes patent. To speak of forms of government in this connection is trebly stupid, for every schoolboy knows that monarchy and republic are two different forms of government. It must be explained to Mr. Kautsky that both these forms of government, like all transitional "forms of governing" under capitalism, are but so many varieties of the bourgeois state, that is, of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

Lastly, to speak of forms of government is not only a stupid, but also a very crude falsification of Marx, who was very clearly speaking here of this or that form or type of *state*, and not of forms of government.

The proletarian revolution is impossible without the forcible destruction of the bourgeois state machine and the substitution for it of a new one which, in the words of Engels, is "no longer a state in the proper sense of the word." <sup>18</sup>

But Kautsky finds it necessary to gloss this over and to lie—his renegade position demands it.

See to what miserable evasions he resorts.

First evasion: "That Marx did not have in mind a form of governing is proved by the fact that he was of the opinion that in England and America the transition might take place peacefully, i.e., in a democratic way."

The form of government has nothing to do with the case here, for there are monarchies which are not typical of the bourgeois state, such, for instance, as have no military, and there are republics which are quite typical, such, for instance, as have a military and a bureaucracy. This is a universally known historical and political fact, and Kautsky will not succeed in falsifying it.

If Kautsky had wanted to argue in a serious and honest manner he would have asked himself: Are there historical laws of revolution which know of no exception? And the reply would have been: No, there are no such laws. Such laws only apply to the typical, to what Marx once termed the "ideal," meaning average, normal, typical capitalism.

Further, was there in the 'seventies anything which made England and America exceptional in regard to what we are now discussing? It will be obvious to anyone at all familiar with the requirements of science in the domain of history that this question must be put. To fail to put it is tantamount to falsifying science, to engaging in sophistry. And, the question having been put, there can be no doubt as to the reply: the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat is violence against the bourgeoisie; and the necessity for such violence is particularly created, as Marx and Engels have repeatedly explained in detail (especially in *The Civil War in France* and in the preface to it), by the existence of a military and a bureaucracy. But it is precisely these institutions that were non-existent in England and America in the 1870's, when Marx made his observations (they do exist in England and in America now).

Kautsky has to be dishonest literally at every step to cover up his renegacy!

And note how he inadvertently betrayed the cloven hoof; he wrote: "peacefully," i.e., in a democratic way!!

In defining dictatorship, Kautsky tried his utmost to conceal from the reader the fundamental symptom of this concept, namely, revolutionary violence. But now the truth is out: it is a question of the contrast between peaceful and violent revolutions.

That is where the trouble lies. Kautsky had to retort to all these evasions, sophistries and fraudulent falsifications only in order to dissociate himself from violent revolution, and to conceal his renunciation of it, his desertion to the liberal labour policy, i.e., to the side of the bourgeoisie. That is where the trouble lies.

Kautsky the "historian" so shamelessly falsifies history that he forgets the fundamental fact that pre-monopoly capitalism—which reached its zenith actually in the 1870's—was by virtue of its funda-

mental economic traits (which were most typical in England and America) distinguished by a, relatively speaking, maximum attachment for peace and freedom. Imperialism, on the other hand, *i.e.*, monopoly capitalism, which finally matured only in the twentieth century, is, by virtue of its fundamental economic traits, distinguished by a minimum attachment for peace and freedom, and by a maximum and universal development of militarism. To "fail to notice" this in discussing the extent to which a peaceful or violent revolution is typical or probable is to stoop to the position of a common or garden variety lackey of the bourgeoisie.

Second evasion: The Paris Commune was a dictatorship of the proletariat, but it was elected by universal suffrage (the bourgeoisie not being deprived of the franchise), i.e., "democratically." And Kautsky says elatedly: "...The dictatorship of the proletariat, for him [Marx] is a condition which necessarily follows from pure democracy, if the proletariat represents the majority" (bei überwiegendem Proletariat—p. 21).

This argument is so amusing that one truly suffers from a veritable embarras de richesses (an embarrassment due to the wealth of replies that can be made to it). Firstly, it is well known that the flower, the General Staff, the upper strata of the bourgeoisie had fled from Paris to Versailles. In Versailles there was the "Socialist" Louis Blanc—which, by the way, proves the falsity of Kautsky's assertion that "all trends" of socialism took part in the Paris Commune. Is it not ridiculous to represent the division of the inhabitants of Paris into two belligerent camps, in one of which the entire militant and politically active section of the bourgeoisie was concentrated, as "pure democracy," with "universal suffrage"?

Secondly, the Paris Commune waged war against Versailles as the workers' government of France did against the bourgeois government. What has "pure democracy" and "universal suffrage" got to do with it, when Paris was deciding the fate of France? When Marx expressed the opinion that the Paris Commune had committed a mistake in failing to seize the bank, which belonged to the whole of France, 19 did he proceed from the principles and practice of "pure democracy"?

Really, Kautsky must be writing in a country in which the people are forbidden by the police to laugh "in crowds," otherwise Kautsky would have been killed by ridicule.

Thirdly, I would respectfully remind Mr. Kautsky, who knows

Marx and Engels by heart, of the following appreciation of the Paris Commune given by Engels from the point of view of—"pure democracy":

"Have these gentlemen [the anti-authoritarians] ever seen a revolution? A revolution is undoubtedly the most authoritarian thing there is, an act whereby one part of the population imposes its will upon the other part by means of rifles, bayonets and cannon, all very authoritarian means; and the victorious party must perforce maintain its rule by means of the terror which its arms inspire in the reactionaries. Would the Paris Commune have lasted a single day if it had not made use of the authority of the armed people against the bourgeoisie? Should we not, on the contrary, reproach it for having made too little use of this authority?" <sup>20</sup>

Here you have your "pure democracy"! How Engels would have ridiculed the vulgar petty bourgeois, the "Social-Democrat" (in the French sense of the 'forties and the general European sense of 1914-18), who took it into his head to talk about "pure democracy" in a society divided into classes!

But enough. It is impossible to enumerate all the absurdities uttered by Kautsky, since every phrase is a bottomless pit of renegacy.

Marx and Engels analysed the Paris Commune in a most detailed manner and showed that its merit lies in its attempt to smash, to break up the "ready-made state machinery." Marx and Engels considered this conclusion to be so important that this was the only amendment they introduced in 1872 in the (in part) "obsolete" programme of The Communist Manifesto. 21 Marx and Engels showed that the Paris Commune had abolished the army and the bureaucracy, had abolished parliamentarism, had destroyed "that parasitic excrescence, the state," etc.; but the sage Kautsky, donning his nightcap, repeats the fairy-tale about "pure democracy," which has been told a thousand times by liberal professors.

Not without reason did Rosa Luxemburg declare, on August 4, 1914,\* that German Social-Democracy was now a stinking corpse.

Third evasion: "When we speak of the dictatorship as a form of government we cannot speak of the dictatorship of a class, since a class, as we have already pointed out, can only rule but not govern..." It is "organisations" or "parties" that govern!

On this day the Social-Democratic deputies in the Reichstag voted credits for the imperialist war.—Ed.

That is a muddle, a sheer muddle, Mr. "Muddle Counsellor." Dictatorship is not a "form of government"; that is ridiculous nonsense. And Marx does not speak of the form of government, but of the form or type of state. That is something altogether different. It is altogether wrong, also, to say that a class cannot govern; such an absurdity could only have been uttered by a "parliamentary cretin," who sees nothing but bourgeois parliaments and notices nothing but "ruling parties." Any European country will provide Kautsky with examples of government by a ruling class, for instance, by the landlords in the Middle Ages, in spite of their insufficient organisation.

To sum up: Kautsky has in a most unparalleled manner distorted the concept "dictatorship of the proletariat," and has transformed Marx into a common or garden variety liberal; that is, he himself has sunk to the level of a liberal who utters banal phrases about "pure democracy," embellishing and glossing over the class content of bourgeois democracy, and shrinking, above all, from the use of revolutionary violence by the oppressed class. By so "interpreting" the concept "revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat" as to expunge the revolutionary violence of the oppressed class against its oppressors, Kautsky beat the world record in the liberal distortion of Marx. The renegade Bernstein has proved to be a mere puppy compared with the renegade Kautsky.

#### BOURGEOIS AND PROLETARIAN DEMOCRACY

The question which Kautsky has so hopelessly muddled really stands as follows:

If we are not to mock at common sense and history, it is obvious that we cannot speak of "pure democracy" so long as different classes exist; we can only speak of class democracy. (Be it said in parenthesis that "pure democracy" is not only an ignorant phrase, revealing a lack of understanding both of the class struggle and of the nature of the state, but also a thrice-hollow phrase, since in communist society democracy will gradually change and become a habit, and finally wither away, but will never be "pure" democracy.)

"Pure democracy" is the mendacious phrase of a liberal who wants to fool the workers. History knows of bourgeois democracy which

<sup>•</sup> Lenin refers ironically to the fact that the Social-Democratic government, after coming to power, conferred upon Kautsky the title of State Counsellor.—Ed.

takes the place of feudalism, and of proletarian democracy which takes the place of bourgeois democracy.

When Kautsky devotes dozens of pages to "proving" that bourgeois democracy is progressive compared with mediævalism, and that the proletariat must not fail to utilise it in its struggle against the bourgeoisie, that in fact is just liberal twaddle intended to fool the workers. This is a truism, not only for educated Germany, but also for uneducated Russia. Kautsky is simply throwing "learned" dust in the eyes of the workers when, with a serious mien, he talks about Weitling and the Jesuits of Paraguay \* and many other things, but avoids telling about the bourgeois essence of contemporary, i.e., capitalist democracy.

Kautsky takes from Marxism what is acceptable to the liberals, to the bourgeoisie (the criticism of the Middle Ages, and the progressive historical role of capitalism in general and of capitalist democracy in particular), and discards, ignores, glosses over all that in Marxism which is unacceptable to the bourgeoisie (the revolutionary violence of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie for the latter's destruction). That is why Kautsky, by virtue of his objective position and irrespective of what his subjective convictions may be, inevitably becomes a lackey of the bourgeoisie.

Bourgeois democracy, although a great historical advance in comparison with mediævalism, nevertheless remains, and under capitalism cannot but remain, restricted, truncated, false and hypocritical, a paradise for the rich and a snare and a deception for the exploited, for the poor. It is this simple truth, which forms an essential part of Marx's teachings, that Kautsky the "Marxist" has failed to understand. On this fundamental question Kautsky offers "delights" for the bourgeoisie, instead of a scientific criticism of those conditions which make all bourgeois democracy only a democracy for the rich.

Let us first recall to the mind of the most learned Mr. Kautsky the theoretical propositions of Marx and Engels which that erudite man has so disgracefully "forgotten" (in order to please the bourgeoisie), and then explain the question as popularly as possible.

Not only the ancient and feudal, but also the "modern representative state is the instrument for exploiting wage labour by capital." <sup>22</sup> (Engels, in his work on the state.)

<sup>•</sup> Reference is here made to the Portuguese and Spanish Jesuits who settled in South America in the sixteenth century and forced the native Indians to work for them as serfs.—Ed.

"As, therefore, the 'state' is only a transitional institution which is used in the struggle, in the revolution, in order to hold down...one's adversaries by force, it is pure nonsense to talk of a 'free people's state'; so long as the proletariat still uses the state, it does not use it in the interests of freedom but in order to hold down its adversaries, and as soon as it becomes possible to speak of freedom the state as such ceases to exist." (Frederick Engels, in his letter to Bebel, March 28, 1875.) <sup>23</sup>

"In reality...the state is nothing but a machine for the oppression of one class by another, and indeed in the democratic republic not less than in the monarchy." (Engels, Introduction to Marx's *Civil War in France*.)<sup>24</sup>

"Universal suffrage is thus the gauge of the maturity of the working class. It cannot and never will be anything more in the modern state." <sup>25</sup> (Engels, in his work on the state.)

Mr. Kautsky tediously chews the cud over the first part of this proposition, which is acceptable to the bourgeoisie. But as to the second part, which we have italicised and which is not acceptable to the bourgeoisie, the renegade Kautsky conveniently omits it!

"The Commune was to be a working, not a parliamentary body, executive and legislative at the same time.... Instead of deciding once in three or six years which member of the ruling class was to misrepresent the people in parliament, universal suffrage was to serve the people, constituted in Communes, as individual suffrage serves every other employer in the search for the workmen and managers in his business." (Marx, The Civil War in France.)<sup>26</sup>

Every one of these propositions, which are well known to the most learned Mr. Kautsky, is a slap in the face to him and lays bare his renegacy. Nowhere in his pamphlet does Kautsky reveal the slightest understanding of these truths. His whole pamphlet is a sheer mockery of Marxism!

Take the fundamental laws of modern states, take their administration, take the right of assembly, freedom of the press, or "equality of all citizens before the law," and you will see at every step evidence of the hypocrisy of bourgeois democracy with which every honest and class-conscious worker is familiar. There is not a single state, however democratic, which does not contain loopholes or reservations in its constitution guaranteeing the bourgeoisie the possibility of dispatching troops against the workers, of proclaiming martial law, and so forth, in case of a "violation of law and order," i.e., in case the exploited class "violates" its position of slavery and tries to behave in a non-

slavish manner. Kautsky shamelessly embellishes bourgeois democracy and omits to mention, for instance, how the most democratic and republican bourgeoisie of America or Switzerland deals with workers on strike.

Oh, the wise and learned Kautsky remains silent about these things! That pundit and statesman does not realise that to remain silent on this matter is despicable. He prefers to tell the workers nursery tales to the effect that democracy means "protecting the minority." It is incredible, but it is a fact. In the summer of this year of our Lord 1918, in the fifth year of the world imperialist slaughter and the strangulation of international minorities (i.e., those who have not despicably betrayed socialism, like the Renaudels and Longuets, the Scheidemanns and Kautskys, the Hendersons and Webbs) in all "democracies of the world," the learned Mr. Kautsky sweetly sings the praises of "protection of the minority." Those who are interested may read this on page 15 of Kautsky's pamphlet. And on page 16 this learned individual tells you about the Whigs and Tories in England in the eighteenth century!

Oh, wonderful erudition! Oh, refined servility to the bourgeoisie! Oh, civilised belly-crawling and boot-licking before the capitalists! If I were Krupp or Scheidemann, or Clemenceau or Renaudel, I would pay Mr. Kautsky millions, reward him with Judas kisses, praise him before the workers and urge "Socialist unity" with "honourable" men like him. To write pamphlets against the dictatorship of the proletariat, to talk about the Whigs and Tories in England in the eighteenth century, to assert that democracy means "protecting the minority," and remain silent about pogroms against internationalists in the "democratic" republic of America—is this not rendering lackey service to the bourgeoisie?

The learned Mr. Kautsky has "forgotten"—accidentally, no doubt—a "bagatelle"; namely, that the ruling party in a bourgeois democracy extends the protection of the minority only to another bourgeois party, while on all serious, profound and fundamental issues the proletariat gets martial law or pogroms, instead of the "protection of the minority." The more highly developed a democracy is, the more imminent are pogroms or civil war in connection with any profound political divergence which is dangerous to the bourgeoisie. The learned Mr. Kautsky could have studied this "law" of bourgeois democracy in connection with the Dreyfus affair in republican France, with the lynching of

Negroes and internationalists in the democratic republic of America, with the case of Ireland and Ulster in democratic Britain, with the persecution of the Bolsheviks and the organisations of pogroms against them in April 1917 in the democratic republic of Russia. I have purposely chosen examples not only from the time of the war but also from pre-war time. But mealy-mouthed Mr. Kautsky is pleased to shut his eyes to these facts of the twentieth century, and instead to tell the workers wonderfully new, remarkably interesting, unusually edifying and incredibly important things about the Whigs and Tories of the eighteenth century!

Take the bourgeois parliament. Can it be that learned Mr. Kautsky has never heard that the more highly developed democracy is, the more the bourgeois parliaments are under the sway of the stock exchange and the bankers? This, of course, does not mean that we must not make use of bourgeois parliaments (the Bolsheviks made better use of them than any other party in the world, for in 1912-14 we captured the entire workers' curia in the Fourth Duma.\*) But it does mean that only a liberal can forget the historical limitations and conventional character of bourgeois parliamentarism as Kautsky does. Even in the most democratic bourgeois state the oppressed masses at every step encounter the crying contradiction between the formal equality proclaimed by the "democracy" of the capitalists and the thousand and one real limitations and complications which turn the proletarians into wage-slaves. It is precisely this contradiction that is opening the eyes of the masses to the rottenness, mendacity and hypocrisy of capitalism. It is this contradiction which the agitators and propagandists of socialism are constantly showing up to the masses, in order to prepare them for revolution. And now that the era of revolution has begun, Kautsky turns his back upon it and begins to extol the charms of moribund bourgeois democracy!

Proletarian democracy, of which Soviet government is one of the forms, has brought a development and expansion of democracy hitherto unprecedented in the world, precisely for the vast majority of the population, for the exploited and toiling people. To write a whole pamphlet about democracy, as Kautsky did, in which two pages are devoted to dictatorship and dozens of pages to "pure democracy,"

<sup>\*</sup> According to the law of June 16, 1907, elections in certain provinces were so conducted that workers' sections were organised into special election districts, which enabled the workers to elect their candidates.—Ed.

and fail to notice this fact, means distorting the subject in a liberal way.

Take foreign politics. In no bourgeois state, not even in the most democratic, are they conducted openly. In all democratic countries—France, Switzerland, America, or England—the masses are deceived on an incomparably wider scale and in a more subtle manner than in other countries. The Soviet government has torn the veil of mystery from foreign politics in a revolutionary way. Kautsky has not noticed this, he remains silent about it, although in the present era of predatory wars and secret treaties for the "division of spheres of influence" (i.e., for the partition of the world among the capitalist bandits) the subject is one of cardinal importance, for on it depends the question of peace, the life and death of tens of millions of people.

Take the organisation of the state. Kautsky clutches at all manner of "trifles," down to the argument that under the Soviet constitution elections are "indirect," but he misses the essence of the matter. He fails to see the class nature of the state apparatus, of the machinery of state: under bourgeois democracy the capitalists, by a thousand and one tricks—which are the more artful and effective the more "pure" democracy is developed—debar the masses from a share in the work of administration, from freedom of the press, the right of assembly, etc. The Soviet government is the first in the world (or strictly speaking the second, because the Paris Commune began to do the same thing) to enlist the masses, the exploited masses, in the work of administration. For the toiling masses, participation in bourgeois parliaments (which never decide important questions under bourgeois democracy; they are decided by the stock exchange and the banks) is hindered by a thousand and one obstacles, and the workers know and feel, see and realise perfectly well that the bourgeois parliaments are institutions alien to them, instruments for the oppression of the proletarians by the bourgeois, institutions of a hostile class, of an exploiting minority.

The Soviets are the direct organisation of the toiling and exploited masses themselves, which *helps* them to organise and administer the state themselves in every possible way. And in this it is the vanguard of the toiling and exploited, the urban proletariat, that enjoys the advantage, in that it is best organised by the large enterprises; it is much easier for it to elect and watch elections. The Soviet organisation automatically helps to unite all the toilers and exploited round their vanguard, the proletariat. The old bourgeois apparatus—the bureauc-

racy, the privileges of wealth, of bourgeois education, of social connections, etc. (which are the more varied, the more highly bourgeois democracy is developed)—all this disappears under the Soviet form of organisation. Freedom of the press ceases to be hyprocrisy, because the printing plants and stocks of paper are taken away from the bourgeoisie. The same thing applies to the best buildings, the palaces, the mansions and manor houses. The Soviet government took thousands and thousands of these best buildings from the exploiters at one stroke, and in this way made the right of assembly—without which democracy is a fraud—a million times more "democratic." Indirect elections to non-local Soviets make it easier to hold Congresses of Soviets, they make the entire apparatus less costly, more flexible, more accessible to the workers and peasants at a time when life is seething and it is necessary to be able very quickly to recall one's local deputy or to delegate him to the general Congress of Soviets.

Proletarian democracy is a million times more democratic than any bourgeois democracy; Soviet government is a million times more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois republic.

Only one who deliberately serves the bourgeoisie, or one who is politically as dead as a doornail, who does not see real life from behind the dusty pages of bourgeois books, who is thoroughly imbued with bourgeois-democratic prejudices, and thereby objectively becomes a lackey of the bourgeoisie, could have failed to see this.

Only one who is incapable of presenting the question from the point of view of the oppressed classes could have failed to see this.

Is there a single country in the world, even among the most democratic bourgeois countries, in which the average rank-and-file worker, the average rank-and-file village labourer, or village semi-proletarian generally (i.e., the representative of the oppressed masses, the overwhelming majority of the population), enjoys anything approaching such liberties as in Soviet Russia: holding meetings in the best buildings, using the largest printing plants and biggest stocks of paper to express his ideas and to defend his interests, promoting men and women of his own class to administer and to "run" the state?

It is ridiculous to think that Mr. Kautsky could find in any country even one well-informed worker or agricultural labourer out of a thousand who would have any doubts as to the reply to this question. Instinctively, from hearing fragments of admissions of the truth in the bourgeois press, the workers of the whole world sympathise with

the Soviet Republic precisely because they regard it as a proletarian democracy, a democracy for the poor, and not a democracy for the rich, as every bourgeois democracy, even the best, actually is.

We are governed (and our state is "run") by bourgeois bureaucrats, by bourgeois members of parliament, by bourgeois judges—such is the simple, obvious and indisputable truth, which tens and hundreds of millions of the exploited classes in all bourgeois countries, including the most democratic, know from their living experience, feel and realise every day.

But in Russia the bureaucratic machine has been completely smashed, razed to the ground; the old judges have all been sent packing, the bourgeois parliament has been dispersed—and far more accessible representation has been given to the workers and peasants; their Soviets have replaced the bureaucrats, or their Soviets control the bureaucrats, and their Soviets elect the judges. This fact alone is enough to cause all the oppressed classes to recognise the Soviet government, that is, the present form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, as being a million times more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois republic.

Kautsky does not understand this truth, which is so obvious and intelligible to every worker, because he has "forgotten," "unlearned" to put the question: democracy for what class? He argues from the point of view of "pure" (i.e., non-class? or above-class?) democracy. He argues like Shylock: my "pound of flesh," and nothing else. Equality for all citizens—otherwise there is no democracy.

We must ask the learned "Marxist" and "Socialist" Kautsky: Can there be equality between the exploited and the exploiters?

It is monstrous, it is incredible that one should have to put such a question in discussing a book written by the ideological leader of the Second International. But "having put your hand to the plough, don't look back," and having undertaken to write about Kautsky, I must explain to the learned man why there can be no equality between the exploiters and the exploited.

CAN THERE BE EQUALITY BETWEEN THE EXPLOITED AND THE EXPLOITERS?

# Kautsky argues as follows:

1. "The exploiters have always constituted only a small minority of the population" (p. 14 of Kautsky's pamphlet). That is certainly true. Taking this as the starting point, what should be the argument? One may argue in a Marxist, a socialist way; in which case one would take as the basis the relation between the exploited and the exploiters. Or one may argue in a liberal, a bourgeois-democratic way; and in that case one would take as the basis the relation between the majority and the minority.

If we argue in a Marxist way, we must say: the exploiters inevitably transform the state (we are speaking of democracy, i.e., one of the forms of the state) into an instrument for the rule of their class, or the exploiters, over the exploited. Hence, so long as there are exploiters who rule the majority, the exploited, the democratic state must inevitably be a democracy for the exploiters. A state of the exploited must fundamentally differ from such a state; it must be a democracy for the exploited, and a means of suppressing the exploiters; and the suppression of a class means inequality for that class, its exclusion from "democracy."

If we argue in a liberal way, we must say: the majority decides, the minority submits. Those who do not submit are punished. That is all. Nothing need be said about the class character of the state in general, or of "pure democracy" in particular, because it is irrelevant; for a majority is a majority and a minority is a minority. A pound of flesh is a pound of flesh, and that is all there is to it.

And this is exactly the way Kautsky argues.

2. "Why should the rule of the proletariat assume, and necessarily assume, a form which is incompatible with democracy?" (p. 21). Then follows a very lengthy and very verbose explanation, backed by a quotation from Marx and the election figures of the Paris Commune, to the effect that the proletariat is in the majority. The conclusion is:

"A regime which is so strongly rooted in the masses has not the slightest reason for encroaching upon democracy. It cannot always dispense with violence in cases when violence is employed to suppress democracy. Violence can only be met with violence. But a regime which knows that it has the support of the masses will employ violence only in order to protect democracy and not to destroy it. It would be simply suicidal if it attempted to destroy its most reliable basis—universal suffrage, that deep source of mighty moral authority" (p. 22).

You see, the relation between the exploited and the exploiters has entirely vanished in Kautsky's argument. All that remains is majority

in general, minority in general, democracy in general, the "pure democracy" with which we are already familiar.

And all this, mark you, is said à propos of the Paris Commune! We will quote Marx and Engels, by way of illustration, to show how they discuss the subject of dictatorship, à propos of the Paris Commune:

MARX: "... When the workers substitute their revolutionary dictatorship for the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie... in order to break down the resistance of the bourgeoisie... the workers invest the state with a revolutionary and transitional form..." 27

by means of the terror which its arms inspire in the reactionaries. Would the Paris Commune have lasted a single day if it had not made use of the authority of the armed people against the bourgeoisie? Should we not, on the contrary, reproach it for having made too little use of this authority?..."

ENGELS: "As, therefore, the state is only a transitional institution which is used in the struggle, in the revolution, in order to hold down one's adversaries by force, it is pure nonsense to talk of a free people's state. So long as the proletariat still uses the state, it does not use it in the interests of freedom but in order to hold down its adversaries, and as soon as it becomes possible to speak of freedom the state as such ceases to exist...."

Kautsky is as far removed from Marx and Engels as heaven is from earth, as a liberal from a proletarian revolutionary. The pure democracy and simple "democracy" that Kautsky talks about is merely a paraphrase of the "free people's state," i.e., pure nonsense. Kautsky, with the learned air of a most learned armchair fool, or with the innocent air of a ten-year-old school girl, asks: Why do we need a dictatorship when we have a majority? And Marx and Engels explain:

In order to break down the resistance of the bourgeoisie;

In order to inspire the reactionaries with terror;

In order to maintain the authority of the armed people against the bourgeoisie;

In order that the proletariat may forcibly hold down its adversaries. But Kautsky does not understand these explanations. Infatuated with the "purity" of democracy, blind to its bourgeois character, he "consistently" urges that the majority, since it is the majority, need not "break down the resistance" of the minority, nor "forcibly hold it

down"—it is sufficient to suppress cases of infringement of democracy. Infatuated with the "purity" of democracy, Kautsky inadvertently commits the same little error that all bourgeois democrats always commit, namely, he takes formal equality (which is nothing but a fraud and hypocrisy under capitalism) for actual equality. Quite a bagatelle!

The exploiter and the exploited cannot be equal.

This truth, however unpleasant it may be to Kautsky, is nevertheless an essential part of socialism.

Another truth: there can be no real, actual equality until all possibility of the exploitation of one class by another has been destroyed.

The exploiters can be defeated at one stroke in the event of a successful insurrection at the centre, or of a mutiny in the army. But except in very rare and special cases, the exploiters cannot be destroyed at one stroke. It is impossible to expropriate all the landlords and capitalists of a country of any size at one stroke. Furthermore, expropriation alone, as a legal or political act, does not settle the matter by a long way, because it is necessary to depose the landlords and capitalists in actual fact, to replace their management of the factories and estates by workers' management in actual fact. There can be no equality between the exploiters-who for many generations have enjoyed education and the advantages and habits of wealth-and the exploited, the majority of whom even in the most advanced and most democratic bourgeois republics are downtrodden, backward, ignorant, intimidated and disunited. For a long time after the revolution the exploiters inevitably continue to enjoy a number of great practical advantages: they still have money (since it is impossible to abolish money all at once); some movable property—often fairly considerable; they still have various connections, habits of organisation and management, knowledge of all the "secrets" (customs, methods, means and possibilities) of management, superior education, close connections with the higher technical personnel (who live and think like the bourgeoisie), incomparably greater experience in the art of war (this is very important), and so on, and so forth.

If the exploiters are defeated in one country only—and this, of course, is the typical case, since a simultaneous revolution in a number of countries is a rare exception—they still remain stronger than the exploited, for the international connections of the exploiters are enormous. The fact that a section of the exploited, or the least developed section of the middle peasant, artisan and similar masses, may, and

indeed do, follow the exploiters has been proved hitherto by all revolutions, including the Commune (for there were also proletarians among the Versailles troops, which the most learned Kautsky seems to have "forgotten").

In these circumstances, to assume that in a revolution which is at all profound and serious the issue is decided simply by the relation between the majority and the minority is the acme of stupidity, the stupid prejudice of a common or garden variety liberal, an attempt to deceive the masses by concealing from them a well-established historical truth. This historical truth is that in every profound revolution, a prolonged, stubborn and desperate resistance of the exploiters, who for a number of years enjoy important practical advantages over the exploited, is the rule. Never—except in the sentimental phantasies of the sentimental simpleton Kautsky—will the exploiters submit to the decision of the exploited majority without making use of their advantages in a last desperate battle, or series of battles.

The transition from capitalism to communism represents an entire historical epoch. Until this epoch has terminated, the exploiters will inevitably cherish the hope of restoration, and this hope will be converted into attempts at restoration. And after their first serious defeat, the overthrown exploiters—who had not expected their overthrow, never believed it possible, never conceded the thought of it—will throw themselves with tenfold energy, with furious passion and hatred grown a hundredfold, into the battle for the recovery of their lost "paradise," on behalf of their families who had been leading such a sweet and easy life and whom now the "common herd" is condemning to ruin and destitution (or to "common" work...). In the train of the capitalist exploiters will be found the broad masses of the petty bourgeoisie, with regard to whom the historical experience of every country for decades testifies that they vacillate and hesitate, one day marching behind the proletariat and the next day taking fright at the difficulties of the revolution; that they become panic-stricken at the first defeat or semi-defeat of the workers, grow nervous, run about aimlessly, snivel, and rush from one camp to the other-just like our Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries!

And in these circumstances, in an epoch of desperate, acute war, when history has placed on the order of the day the question as to whether age-long privileges are to be or not to be—at such a time to talk about majority and minority, about pure democracy, about

dictatorship being unnecessary and about equality between the exploiter and the exploited! What infinite stupidity and colossal philistinism are needed for this!

But during the decades of comparatively "peaceful" capitalism, between 1871 and 1914, whole Augean stables of philistinism, imbecility, and renegacy accumulated in the Socialist parties which were adapting themselves to opportunism.

The reader will probably have noticed that Kautsky, in the passage from his pamphlet quoted above, speaks of an attempt to encroach upon universal suffrage (extolling it, by the way, as a deep source of mighty moral authority, whereas Engels, à propos of the same Paris Commune and the same question of dictatorship, spoke of the authority of the armed people against the bourgeoisie—a very characteristic difference between the philistine's and the revolutionary's views on "authority"...).

It should be observed that the question of depriving the exploiters of the franchise is purely a Russian question, and not a question of the dictatorship of the proletariat in general. Had Kautsky, casting aside hypocrisy, entitled his pamphlet Against the Bolsheviks, the title would have corresponded to the contents of the pamphlet, and Kautsky would have been justified in speaking directly about the franchise. But Kautsky wanted to write primarily as a "theoretician." He called his pamphlet the Dictatorship of the Proletariat-in general. He speaks about the Soviets and about Russia specially only in the second part of the pamphlet, beginning with the fifth paragraph. The subject dealt with in the first part (from which I took the quotation), is democracy and dictatorship in general. In speaking about the franchise, Kautsky betrayed himself as an opponent of the Bolsheviks, as one who does not care a brass farthing for theory. For theory, i.e., the discussion of the general (and not the nationally specific) class basis of democracy and dictatorship, ought to deal not with a special question, such as the franchise, but with the general question of whether democracy can be preserved for the rich and the exploiters in the historical period of the overthrow of the exploiters and the substitution of the state of the exploited for the exploiters' state.

That is the only way a theoretician can present the question.

We know the example of the Paris Commune, we know all that was said by the founders of Marxism in connection with it and in

reference to it. On the basis of this material I examined, for example, the question of democracy and dictatorship in my book, The State and Revolution, written before the October Revolution. I did not say anything at all about restricting the franchise. And it must be said now that the question of restricting the franchise is a nationally specific and not a general question of the dictatorship. One must study the question of restricting the franchise in the light of the specific conditions of the Russian Revolution and the specific path of its development. This will be done later on in this pamphlet. It would be a mistake, however, to guarantee in advance that the impending proletarian revolutions in Europe will all, or the majority of them, be necessarily accompanied by restriction of the franchise for the bourgeoisie. It may be so. After our experience of the war and of the Russian Revolution we can say that it probably will be so; but it is not absolutely necessary for the exercise of the dictatorship, it is not an essential earmark of the logical concept "dictatorship," it does not enter as an essential condition in the historical and class concept "dictatorship."

The necessary earmark, the essential condition of dictatorship, is the forcible suppression of the exploiters as a *class*, and, consequently, the infringement of "pure democracy," *i.e.*, of equality and freedom for that class.

Only in this way can the question be put theoretically. And by failing to put the question thus, Kautsky showed that he opposes the Bolsheviks not as a theoretician, but as a sycophant of the opportunists and the bourgeoisie.

In which countries, and given what special national features of this or that capitalism, democracy for the exploiters will be restricted, infringed upon (wholly or in part) is a question of the special national features of this or that capitalism, of this or that revolution. The theoretical question is an entirely different one, viz., is the dictatorship of the proletariat possible without infringing democracy in relation to the exploiting class?

It is precisely this question, the only theoretically important and essential one, that Kautsky has evaded. He has quoted all sorts of passages from Marx and Engels, except those which bear on this question, and which I quoted above.

Kautsky talks about everything, about everything that is acceptable to liberals and bourgeois democrats and does not go beyond their

circle of ideas, but he does not talk about the main thing, namely, the fact that the proletariat cannot achieve victory without breaking the resistance of the bourgeoisie, without forcibly suppressing its enemies, and that where there is "forcible suppression," where there is no "freedom," there is, of course, no democracy.

This Kautsky has not understood.

We shall now examine the experience of the Russian Revolution and that divergence between the Soviets and the Constituent Assembly which led to the dissolution of the latter and to the withdrawal of the franchise from the bourgeoisie.

#### THE SOVIETS DARE NOT BECOME STATE ORGANISATIONS

The Soviets are the Russian form of the proletarian dictatorship. If a Marxist theoretician, writing a work on the dictatorship of the proletariat, had really studied the subject (and not merely repeated the petty-bourgeois lamentations against dictatorship, as Kautsky does, repeating the Menshevik melodies) he would first of all have given a general definition of dictatorship, and would then have examined its peculiar national form, the Soviets; he would have given his critique of them as one of the forms of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

It goes without saying that nothing serious could be expected from Kautsky after his liberal-like "interpretation" of Marx's theory of the dictatorship; but the manner in which he approached the question of what the Soviets are and the way he dealt with this question is highly characteristic.

The Soviets, he says, recalling their rise in 1905,\* created "the most all-embracing (umfassendste) form of proletarian organisation, for it embraced all the wage workers" (p. 31). In 1905 they were only local bodies; in 1917 they became national organisations.

"The Soviet organisation," Kautsky continues, "has already a great and glorious history behind it, and it has a still more mighty future before it, and not in Russia alone. It appears that everywhere the old methods of the economic and political struggle of the proletariat are inadequate" (versagen; this German expression is somewhat stronger than "inadequate" and somewhat weaker than "impotent") "against the gigantic economic

The Soviet of Workers' Deputies came into being during the Russian Revolution of 1905.—Ed.

and political forces which finance capital has at its disposal. These old methods cannot be discarded: they are still indispensable for normal times; but from time to time tasks arise which they cannot cope with, tasks that can be successful only as a result of a combination of all the political and economic instruments of force of the working class" (p. 32).

Then follows a disquisition on the mass strike and on the "trade union bureaucracy"—which is no less necessary than the trade unions—being "useless for the purpose of directing the mighty class battles that are more and more becoming the sign of the times..."

"Thus," Kautsky concludes, "the Soviet organisation is one of the most important phenomena of our time. It promises to acquire decisive importance in the great decisive battles between capital and labour towards which we are marching.

"But are we justified in demanding more of the Soviets? The Bolsheviks, after the Revolution of November [new style, or October, according to our style] 1917, secured in conjunction with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries a majority in the Russian Soviets of Workers' Deputies, and, after the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly, they set out to transform the Soviets from a militant organisation of one class, as they had been till then, into a state organisation. They destroyed the democracy which the Russian people had won in the March [new style, or February, our style] Revolution. In line with this, the Bolsheviks have ceased to call themselves Social-Democrats. They call themselves Communists" (p. 33, Kautsky's italics).

Those who are familiar with Russian Menshevik literature will at once see how slavishly Kautsky copies Martov, Axelrod, Stein and Co. Yes, "slavishly," because Kautsky absurdly distorts the facts in order to pander to Menshevik prejudices. Kautsky did not take the trouble, for instance, to ask his informants (Stein of Berlin, or Axelrod of Stockholm) when the question of changing the name of the Bolsheviks to Communists and of the importance of the Soviets as state organisations was first raised. Had Kautsky made this simple inquiry he would not have penned these laughter-provoking lines, for both these questions were raised by the Bolsheviks in April 1917, for example, in my "Theses" of April 4, 1917, \* i.e., long before the Revolution of October 1917 (and, of course, long before the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly on January 5, 1918).

<sup>\*</sup>See V. I. Lenin, "The Tasks of the Proletariat in the Present Revolution," Collected Works, Vol. XX (International Publishers, N. Y.)—Ed.

But the passage from Kautsky's argument which I have just quoted in full represents the crux of the whole question of the Soviets. The crux is: should the Soviets aspire to become state organisations (in April 1917 the Bolsheviks put forward the slogan: "All Power to the Soviets!" and at the Bolshevik Party conference held in the same month they declared that they were not satisfied with a bourgeois parliamentary republic but demanded a workers' and peasants' republic of the Paris Commune type, or Soviet type); or should the Soviets not strive for this, refrain from taking political power into their hands, refrain from becoming state organisations and remain the "militant organisations" of one "class" (as Martov expressed it, plausibly concealing under this innocent wish the fact that under Menshevik leadership the Soviets were an instrument for the subjection of the workers to the bourgeoisie)?

Kautsky slavishly repeats Martov's words, picks out *fragments* of the theoretical controversy between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks, and uncritically and senselessly transplants them to the general theoretical and general European field. The result is such a hodge-podge as to provoke Homeric langhter in every class-conscious Russian worker who hears of these arguments of Kautsky's.

And when we explain what the question at issue is, every worker in Europe (barring a handful of inveterate social-imperialists) will greet Kautsky with a similar roar of laughter.

Kautsky has rendered Martov a backhanded service by reducing his mistake to an obvious absurdity. Let us see what Kautsky's argument amounts to.

The Soviets embrace all wage workers. The old methods of economic and political struggle of the proletariat are inadequate against finance capital. The Soviets have a great role to play in the future, and not only in Russia. They will play a decisive role in the great decisive battles between capital and labour in Europe. That is what Kautsky says.

Excellent. But will not the "decisive battles between capital and labour" decide which of the two classes will gain possession of the power of state?

Nothing of the kind! God forbid!

Organisations which embrace all the wage workers must not become state organisations in the "decisive" battles.

But what is the state?

The state is nothing but a machine for the suppression of one class by another.

Thus, the oppressed class, the vanguard of all the toilers and exploited in modern society, must strive towards the "decisive battles between capital and labour," but must not touch the machine by means of which capital suppresses labour!—It must not break up that machine!—It must not make use of its all-embracing organisation for the purpose of suppressing the exploiters!

Excellent, Mr. Kautsky, magnificent! "We" recognise the class struggle—in the same way as all liberals recognise it, *i.e.*, without the overthrow of the bourgeoisie....

This is where Kautsky's complete rupture both with Marxism and with socialism becomes obvious. Practically, it is desertion to the camp of the bourgeoisie, which is prepared to concede everything except the transformation of the organisations of the class which it oppresses into state organisations. Kautsky can no longer save his position of trying to reconcile everything and of brushing aside all profound contradictions with mere phrases.

Kautsky either rejects the transmission of political power to the working class altogether, or he concedes that the working class may take over the old, bourgeois state machine; but he will not concede that it must break it up, smash it, and replace it by a new, proletarian machine. Whichever way Kautsky's arguments are "interpreted" or "explained," his rupture with Marxism and his desertion to the bourgeoisie are obvious.

Describing what sort of state the victorious working class needs, Marx, already in *The Communist Manifesto*, wrote: "A state, that is, the proletariat organised as the ruling class." Now, we have a man who still claims to be a Marxist coming forward and declaring that the proletariat, organised to a man and waging the "decisive battle" against capital, must not transform its class organisation into a state organisation! Here Kautsky has betrayed that "superstitious reverence for the state" which in Germany, as Engels wrote in 1891,28 "has been carried over...into the general consciousness of the bourgeoisie and even of many workers." Workers, fight!—our philistine "agrees" to this (as every bourgeois "agrees," since the workers are fighting all the same, and the only thing to do is to devise means of blunting the edge of their sword)—fight, but don't dare win! Don't destroy the

state machine of the bourgeoisie; don't put the proletarian "state organisation" in the place of the bourgeois "state organisation"!

Whoever sincerely shares the Marxian view that the state is nothing but a machine for the suppression of one class by another, and who has at all reflected upon this truth, could never have reached the absurd conclusion that the proletarian organisations capable of defeating finance capital must not transform themselves into state organisations. It was this point that betrayed the petty bourgeois, who believes that "after all is said and done" the state is something outside of class, or above class. Indeed, why should the proletariat, "one class," be permitted to wage determined war on capital, which rules not only over the proletariat, but over the whole people, over the whole petty bourgeoisie, over the whole peasantry, yet this proletariat, this "one class," is not to be permitted to transform its organisation into a state organisation? Because the petty bourgeois is afraid of the class struggle, and does not carry it to its logical conclusion, to its main object.

Kautsky has got himself completely mixed up and has given himself away entirely. Mark you, he himself admits that Europe is heading for decisive battles between capital and labour, and that the old methods of economic and political struggle of the proletariat are inadequate. But these old methods were precisely the utilisation of bourgeois democracy. It therefore follows?...

But Kautsky was afraid to think what follows.

... Hence, only a reactionary, only an enemy of the working class, only a henchman of the bourgeoisie, can now turn his face to the obsolete past, paint the charms of the bourgeois democracy and babble about pure democracy. Bourgeois democracy was progressive compared with mediævalism, and it was necessary to utilise it. But now it is inadequate for the working class. Now we must look, not backward, but forward—to substituting proletarian democracy for bourgeois democracy. And although the preparatory work for the proletarian revolution, the formation and training of the proletarian army were possible (and necessary) within the framework of the bourgeois-democratic state, now that we have reached the stage of "decisive battles," to confine the proletariat to this framework means betraying the cause of the proletariat, means being a renegade.

Kautsky has made himself particularly ridiculous by repeating Martov's argument without noticing that in Martov's case this argument was based on another argument which he, Kautsky, does not use!

Martov said (and Kautsky repeats after him) that Russia is not yet ripe for socialism; from which it logically follows that it is too early to transform the Soviets from organs of struggle into state organisations (read: it is timely to transform the Soviets, with the assistance of the Menshevik leaders, into instruments for subjecting the workers to the imperialist bourgeoisie). Kautsky, however, cannot say outright that Europe is not ripe for socialism. In 1909, when he was not yet a renegade, he wrote that there was now no reason to fear a premature revolution, that whoever renounced revolution for fear of defeat would be a traitor. Kautsky does not dare renounce this outright. And so we get the following absurdity, which utterly betrays the stupidity and cowardice of the petty bourgeois: on the one hand, Europe is ripe for socialism and is marching towards decisive battles between capital and labour; but, on the other hand, the fighting organisation (i.e., the organisation which is formed, grows and becomes strong in battle), the organisation of the proletariat, the vanguard and organiser, the leader of the oppressed, must not be transformed into a state organisation

From the point of view of practical politics the idea that the Soviets are necessary as a fighting organisation but must not be transformed into state organisations is even infinitely more absurd than from the point of view of theory. Even in peace time, when there is no revolutionary situation, the mass struggle of the workers against the capitalists-for instance, a mass strike-gives rise to great bitterness on both sides, to fierce passions in the struggle, to the bourgeoisie insisting on remaining "master in its own house," etc. But in time of revolution, when political life reaches boiling point, an organisation like the Soviets, which embraces all the workers in all branches of industry, all the soldiers, and all the toiling and poorest sections of the rural population—such an organisation, of its own accord, in the course of the struggle, by the simple "logic" of attack and defence, inevitably has to raise the question of power point blank. The attempt to take up a middle position and to "reconcile" the proletariat with the bourgeoisie is sheer stupidity and is doomed to miserable failure. That is what happened in Russia to the preachings of Martov and other Mensheviks, and that will inevitably happen in Germany and other countries if the Soviets succeed in developing on any wide scale, manage to unite and become consolidated. To say to the Soviets: fight, but do

not take the entire political power into your hands, do not become state organisations—is tantamount to preaching class collaboration and "social peace" between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. It is ridiculous even to think that such a position in the midst of fierce struggle could lead to anything but ignominious failure. But it is Kautsky's everlasting fate to sit between two stools. He pretends that he does not agree with the opportunists on anything in theory, but actually he agrees with them on everything essential (i.e., on everything that pertains to revolution), in practice.

### THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY AND THE SOVIET REPUBLIC

The question of the Constituent Assembly and its dispersal by the Bolsheviks is the crux of Kautsky's entire pamphlet. He constantly reverts to it, and the whole of this literary production of the ideological leader of the Second International teems with innuendoes to the effect that the Bolsheviks have "destroyed democracy" (see one of the quotations from Kautsky above). The question is really an interesting and important one, because the relation between bourgeois democracy and proletarian democracy here confronts the revolution in a practical form. Let us see how our "Marxist theoretician" has dealt with the question.

He quotes the "Theses on the Constituent Assembly," which were written by me and published in the *Pravda* of December 26, 1917.\*

One would think that no better evidence of Kautsky's serious ap-

One would think that no better evidence of Kautsky's serious approach to the subject, quoting as he does the documents, could be desired. But observe how he quotes. He does not say that there were nineteen of these theses; he does not say that they dealt with the relation between the ordinary bourgeois republic, with a Constituent Assembly, and a Soviet republic, as well as with the history of the divergence in our revolution between the Constituent Assembly and the dictatorship of the proletariat. Kautsky ignores all that, and simply tells the reader that "two of them [of the theses] are particularly important"; one stating that a split occurred among the Socialist-Revolutionaries after the elections to the Constituent Assembly, but before it was convened (Kautsky does not mention that this was the fifth thesis), and the other, that the republic of Soviets is in general a higher democratic form than the Constituent Assembly (Kautsky does not mention that this was the third thesis).

<sup>•</sup> See V. I. Lenin, Selected Works, Vol. VI (International Publishers, N. Y.).—Ed.

And only from this third thesis does Kautsky quote a part in full, namely, the following passage:

"A republic of Soviets... is not only the form of a higher type of democratic institution (as compared with the *ordinary* bourgeois republic crowned by a Constituent Assembly) but it is the only form capable of securing the most painless transition \* to socialism." (Kautsky omits the word "ordinary" and the introductory words of the thesis: "For the transition from the bourgeois to the socialist order, for the dictatorship of the proletariat.")

After quoting these words, Kautsky, with magnificent irony, exclaims:

"It is a pity that this conclusion was arrived at only after the Bolsheviks found themselves in the minority in the Constituent Assembly. Before that no one had demanded it more clamorously than Lenin."

This is literally what Kautsky says on page 31 of his book!

It is positively a gem! Only a sycophant of the bourgeoisie could so misrepresent the question as to give the reader the impression that all the Bolsheviks' talk about a higher type of state was an invention which saw the light of day after they found themselves in the minority in the Constituent Assembly!! Such an infamous lie could only have been uttered by a scoundrel who has sold himself to the bourgeoisie, or, what is absolutely the same thing, who has placed his trust in P. Axelrod and is concealing the source of his information.

For everyone knows that on the very day of my arrival in Russia, on April 4 [17], 1917, I publicly read my theses in which I proclaimed the superiority of the Paris Commune type of state over the bourgeois parliamentary republic. Afterwards, I repeatedly stated this in print, as, for instance, in a pamphlet on political parties, which was translated into English and was published in January 1918 in the New York Evening Post. † Moreover, the conference of the Bolshevik Party

\*Incidentally, Kautsky, with an obvious attempt at sarcasm, repeatedly quotes the expression "most painless" transition; but as the shaft misses its mark, a few pages further on he commits a slight forgery and falsely quotes it as a "painless" transition! Of course, by such means it is easy to put any absurdity into the mouth of an opponent. The forgery also facilitates the evasion of the substance of the argument, namely, that the most painless transition to socialism is possible only when all the poor are organised to a man (Soviets) and when the central State power (of the proletariat) helps to organise them.

† Published January 15, 1918, under title "Lenin on Political Parties in Russia." See V. I. Lenin, "Political Parties in Russia and the Tasks of the Proletariat," Collected Works, Vol. XX (International Publishers, N. Y.).—Ed.

held at the end of April, 1917, adopted a resolution to the effect that a proletarian and peasant republic was superior to a bourgeois parliamentary republic, that our party would not be satisfied with the latter, and that the programme of the party should be amended accordingly.

In face of these facts, what name can be given to Kautsky's trick of assuring his German readers that I had been clamorously demanding the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, and that I began to "belittle" the honour and dignity of the Constituent Assembly only after the Bolsheviks found themselves in the minority in it? How can one excuse such a trick? \* By pleading that Kautsky did not know the facts? If that is the case, why did he undertake to write about them? Or why did he not honestly declare that he was writing on the strength of information supplied by the Mensheviks Stein and P. Axelrod and Co.? By pretending to be objective, Kautsky wants to conceal his role as the servant of the Mensheviks, who are disgruntled because they have been defeated.

But these are only the blossoms, the fruit is yet to come.

Let us assume that Kautsky would not or could not (??) obtain from his informants a translation of the Bolshevik resolutions and declarations on the question of whether they would be satisfied with a bourgeois parliamentary democratic republic or not. Let us assume this, although it is incredible. But Kautsky directly mentions my theses of December 26, 1917, on page 30 of his book.

Does he know these theses in full, or does he know only what was translated for him by Stein, Axelrod and Co.? Kautsky quotes my third theses on the fundamental question of whether the Bolsheviks, before the elections to the Constituent Assembly, regarded a Soviet republic as superior to a bourgeois republic, and whether they told the people that. But he does not quote the second thesis.

The second thesis reads as follows:

"While demanding the convocation of a Constituent Assembly, revolutionary Social-Democracy has from the very beginning of the Revolution of 1917 repeatedly emphasised that a republic of Soviets is a higher form of democracy than the ordinary bourgeois republic with a Constituent Assembly." (My italics.)

In order to represent the Bolsheviks as being devoid of all principles, as "revolutionary opportunists" (this is a term which Kautsky employs

<sup>•</sup> Incidentally, there are many Menshevik lies of this kind in Kautsky's pamphlet! It is a lampoon written by a disgruntled Menshevik.

somewhere in his book, I forget in which connection), Mr. Kautsky has concealed from his German readers the fact that the theses contain a direct reference to "repeated" declarations!

Such are the petty, miserable and contemptible methods Mr. Kautsky employs! That is the way he has evaded the *theoretical* question.

Is it true or not that the bourgeis-democratic parliamentary republic is *inferior* to the Paris Commune or Soviet type of republic. This is the crux of the question, and Kautsky has evaded it. Kautsky has "forgotten" all that Marx said in his analysis of the Paris Commune. He has also "forgotten" Engels' letter to Bebel of March 28, 1875, in which Marx's idea is formulated in a particularly terse and clear fashion: "The Commune...was no longer a state in the proper sense of the word." <sup>29</sup>

Here is the most prominent theoretician of the Second International, ignoring this very question, in a special pamphlet on the *Dictatorship* of the Proletariat, specially dealing with Russia, where the question of a state that is higher than a democratic bourgeois republic has been raised directly and repeatedly. In what way does this differ in fact from desertion to the bourgeois camp?

(Let us observe in parenthesis that in this respect, too, Kautsky is merely following in the footsteps of the Russian Mensheviks. Among the latter there are any number of people who know "all the quotations" from Marx and Engels; but not a single Menshevik, from April to October 1917 and from October 1917 to October 1918, has made a single attempt to examine the question of the Paris Commune type of state. Plekhanov, too, has evaded the question. It was wiser to remain silent.)

It goes without saying that to discuss the dispersal of the Constituent Assembly with people who call themselves Socialists and Marxists, but who in practice desert to the bourgeoisie on the main question, the question of the Paris Commune type of state, would be casting pearls before swine. It will be sufficient for me to give the complete text of my thesis on the Constituent Assembly as an appendix to the present book.\* The reader will then see that the question was presented on December 26, 1917, theoretically, historically, and from the point of view of practical politics.

<sup>\*</sup> See V. I. Lenin, "Thesis on Constituent Assembly," Selected Works, Vol. VI (International Publishers, N. Y.),—Ed.

If Kautsky has completely renounced Marxism as a theoretician he might at least, as a historian, have examined the question of the struggle of the Soviets with the Constituent Assembly. We know from many of Kautsky's works that he could be a Marxian historian, and that such works of his will remain a permanent treasure of the proletariat in spite of his subsequent renegacy. But on this question Kautsky, even as a historian, turns away from the truth, ignores wellknown facts and behaves like a sycophant. He wants to represent the Bolsheviks as being devoid of principles and tells his readers that they tried to allay the conflict with the Constituent Assembly before dispersing it. There is absolutely nothing to be ashamed of; we have nothing to recant: I give the theses in full and there it is said as clear as clear can be: Gentlemen of the vacillating petty bourgeoisie who have got into the Constituent Assembly, either reconcile yourselves to the proletarian dictatorship, or else we shall vanquish you by "revolutionary means" (theses 18 and 19).

That is how a really revolutionary proletariat has always behaved and always will behave towards the vacillating petty bourgeoisie.

Kautsky adopts a formal standpoint on the question of the Constituent Assembly. My theses say clearly and repeatedly that the interests of the revolution are higher than the formal rights of the Constituent Assembly (see theses 16 and 17). The formal democratic point of view is precisely the point of view of the bourgeois democrat who refuses to admit that the interests of the proletariat and of the proletarian class struggle are supreme. As a historian, Kautsky would not have been able to deny that bourgeois parliaments are the organs of this or that class; but now (for the sordid purpose of renouncing revolution) Kautsky finds it necessary to forget his Marxism, and he refrains from putting the question: what class was the Constituent Assembly of Russia the organ of? Kautsky does not examine the concrete conditions; he does not want to face the facts; he does not say a single word to his German readers to suggest that these theses contained, not only a theoretical elucidation of the question of the limited character of bourgeois democracy (theses 1-3), not only an outline of the concrete conditions which determined the discrepancy between the party candidate lists in the middle of October 1917 and the real state of affairs in December 1917 (theses 4-6), but also a history of the class struggle and the civil war in October-December 1917 (theses 7-15). From this concrete history we drew the conclusion (thesis 14) that the slogan:

"All Power to the Constituent Assembly" had, in reality, become the slogan of the Constitutional Democrats and the Kaledinites and their abettors.

Kautsky the historian fails to see this. Kautsky the historian has never heard that universal suffrage gives rise sometimes to petty bourgeois, sometimes to reactionary and counter-revolutionary parliaments. Kautsky the Marxian historian has never heard that the form of elections, the form of democracy, is one thing, and the class content of the given institution is another. This question of the class content of the Constituent Assembly is directly put and answered in my theses. Perhaps my answer is wrong. Nothing would have been more welcome to us than a Marxian criticism of our analysis by an outsider. Instead of writing silly phrases (of which there are plenty in Kautsky's book) about somebody preventing criticism of Bolshevism, he ought to have set out to make such a criticism. But the point is that he has no criticism to offer. He does not even raise the question of a class analysis of the Soviets on the one hand, and of the Constituent Assembly on the other. Hence it is impossible to argue, to debate with Kautsky; and all we can do is to prove to the reader why Kautsky cannot be called anything else than a renegade.

The divergence between the Soviets and the Constituent Assembly has its history, which even a historian who does not adopt the point of view of the class war could not have ignored. Kautsky would not even touch upon this actual history. Kautsky has concealed from his German readers the universally known fact (which only malicious Mensheviks now suppress) that the divergence between the Soviets and the "general state" (that is, bourgeois) institutions existed even under the rule of the Mensheviks, *i.e.*, from the end of February to October 1917. Actually, Kautsky adopts the position of conciliation, compromise and collaboration between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.

However much Kautsky may deny this, it is a fact which is borne out by his whole pamphlet. To say that the Constituent Assembly should not have been dispersed is tantamount to saying that the fight against the bourgeoisie should not have been fought to a finish, that the bourgeoisie should not have been overthrown and that the proletariat should have become reconciled with it.

Why has Kautsky said nothing about the fact that the Mensheviks were engaged in this inglorious work between February and October

1917 and did not achieve anything? If it was possible to reconcile the bourgeoisie with the proletariat why did not the Mensheviks succeed in doing so? Why did the bourgeoisie stand aloof from the Soviets? Why did the *Mensheviks* call the Soviets "revolutionary democracy," and the bourgeoisie the "propertied elements"?

Kautsky has concealed from his German readers that it was precisely the Mensheviks who, in the "epoch" of their rule (February to October 1917), called the Soviets "revolutionary democracy," thereby admitting their superiority over all other institutions. It is only by concealing this fact that the historian Kautsky was able to make it appear that the divergence between the Soviets and the bourgeoisie had no history, that it arose instantaneously, suddenly, without cause, because of the bad behaviour of the Bolsheviks. As a matter of fact, it was precisely the more than six months' (an enormous period in time of revolution) experience of Menshevik compromise, of their attempts to reconcile the proletariat with the bourgeoisie, that convinced the people of the fruitlessness of these attempts and drove the proletariat away from the Mensheviks.

Kautsky admits that the Soviets are an excellent fighting organisation of the proletariat, and that they have a great future before them. But, that being the case, Kautsky's position collapses like a house of cards, or like the dreams of a petty bourgeois who believes that the acute struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie can be avoided. For revolution is one continuous and desperate struggle, and the proletariat is the vanguard class of all the oppressed, the focus and centre of all the aspirations of all the oppressed for their emancipation! Naturally, therefore, the Soviets, as the organ of struggle of the oppressed masses, reflected and expressed the moods and changes of opinions of these masses ever so much more quickly, fully, and faithfully than any other institution (that, incidentally, is one of the reasons why Soviet democracy is the highest type of democracy).

In the period between February 28 (old style) and October 25, 1917, the Soviets managed to convene two All-Russian Congresses of representatives of the overwhelming majority of the population of Russia, of all the workers and soldiers, and of 70 or 80 per cent of the peasantry, not to mention the vast number of local, rural, urban, provincial, and regional congresses. During this period the bourgeoisie did not succeed in convening a single institution that represented the majority (except that obvious sham and mockery called the "Democratic Con-

ference," \* which enraged the proletariat). The Constituent Assembly reflected the same mood of the masses and the same political grouping as the first (June) All-Russian Congress of Soviets. By the time the Constituent Assembly was convened (January 1918), the Second (October 1917) and Third (January 1918) Congresses of Soviets had met, both of which had demonstrated as clear as clear can be that the masses had swung to the Left, had become revolutionised, had turned away from the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, and had passed over to the side of the Bolsheviks; i.e., had turned away from petty-bourgeois leadership, from the illusion that it was possible to reach a compromise with the bourgeoisie, and had joined the proletarian revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie.

Hence, even the external history of the Soviets shows that the dispersal of the Constituent Assembly was inevitable and that this Assembly was a reactionary body. But Kautsky sticks firmly to his "slogan": let "pure democracy" prevail though the revolution perish and the bourgeoisie triumph over the proletariat! Fiat justitia, pereat mundus! [Let justice be done though the world perish.]

Here are the brief figures relating to the All-Russian Congresses of Soviets in the course of the history of the Russian revolution:

All-Russian Congress of Soviets	Number of Delegates	Number of Bolsheviks	Percentage of Bolsheviks
First (June 3, 1917)	790	103	13
Second (October 25, 1917)	675	343	51
Third (January 10, 1918)	710	434	61
Fourth (March 14, 1918)	1,232	795	64
Fifth (July 4, 1918)	1,164	773	66

It is enough to glance at these figures to understand why the defence of the Constituent Assembly and talk (like Kautsky's) about the Bolsheviks not having a majority of the population behind them is only ridiculed in Russia.

<sup>\*</sup> This Conference was held September 27-October 5, 1917, and was called by Kerensky to bolster up the Provisional government after Kornilov's counter-revolutionary uprising.—Ed.

#### THE SOVIET CONSTITUTION

As I have already pointed out, the disfranchisement of the bourgeoisie is not absolutely and necessarily a feature of the dictatorship of the proletariat. And in Russia, the Bolsheviks, who long before October advanced the slogan of proletarian dictatorship, did not say anything in advance about disfranchising the exploiters. This element of the dictatorship did not make its appearance "according to the plan" of any particular party; it emerged of its own accord in the course of the struggle. Of course, Kautsky the historian failed to observe this. He failed to understand that even when the Mensheviks (the advocates of compromise with the bourgeoisie) still ruled the Soviets, the bourgeoisie severed itself from the Soviets of its own accord, boycotted them, put itself up in opposition to them and intrigued against them. The Soviets arose without any constitution and existed without one for more than a year (from the spring of 1917 to the summer of 1918). It was the fury of the bourgeoisie against this independent and omnipotent (because all-embracing) organisation of the oppressed; it was the unscrupulous, self-seeking and sordid fight the bourgeoisie waged against the Soviets; and, lastly, it was the overt participation of the bourgeoisie (from the Cadets to the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, from Milyukov to Kerensky) in the Kornilov mutiny, that paved the way for the formal exclusion of the bourgeoisie from the Soviets.

Kautsky has heard about the Kornilov mutiny, but he majestically scorns historical facts and the course and forms of the struggle which determine the *forms* of the dictatorship. Indeed, what have facts got to do with "pure" democracy? That is why Kautsky's "criticism" of the disfranchisement of the bourgeoisie is distinguished by such aweet naivete, which would be touching in a child but is repulsive in a person who has not yet been officially certified as feeble-minded.

"... If the capitalists find themselves in an insignificant minority under universal suffrage they will more readily be reconciled to their fate" (p. 33).... Charming, is it not? Clever Kautsky has seen many cases in history, and, of course, knows perfectly well from his own observations of life that there are landlords and capitalists who defer to the will of the majority of the oppressed. Clever Kautsky firmly adopts the point of view of an "opposition," i.e., the point of view of the parliamentary struggle. That is literally what he says: "opposition" (p. 34 and elsewhere).

#### THE RENEGADE KAUTSKY

Oh, learned historian and politician! It would not be amiss for you to know that "opposition" is a concept that belongs to the peaceful and only to the parliamentary struggle, i.e., a concept that corresponds to a non-revolutionary situation, a concept that corresponds to a situation marked by an absence of revolution. During revolution we have to deal with a ruthless enemy in civil war; and no reactionary jeremiads of a petty bourgeois who fears such a war, as Kautsky does, will alter the fact. To examine the problems of ruthless civil war at a time when the bourgeoisie is prepared to commit any crime—the example of the Versaillese and their deals with Bismarck must mean something to every person who does not treat history like Gogol's Petrushka \*--when the bourgeoisie is summoning foreign states to its aid and intriguing with them against the revolution—is simply comical. The revolutionary proletariat is to put on a nightcap, like "Muddle-headed Counsellor" Kautsky, and regard the bourgeoisie, which is organising Dutov, Krasnov and Czechoslovak counter-revolutionary insurrections and is paying millions to saboteurs, as a legal "opposition." Oh, what profundity!

Kautsky is interested only in the formal, legal aspect of the question, and, reading his disquisitions on the Soviet Constitution one involuntarily recalls Bebel's words: "Lawyers are thoroughpaced reactionaries."

"In reality," Kautsky writes, "the capitalists alone cannot be disfranchised. What is a capitalist in the legal sense of the term? A property owner? Even in a country which has advanced so far along the path of economic progress as Germany, where the proletariat is so numerous, the establishment of a Soviet republic would disfranchise large masses of the people. In 1907, the number of persons in the German empire engaged in the three great occupational groups—agriculture, industry and commerce—together with their families amounted roughly to thirty-five million in the wage earners' and salaried employees' group, and seventeen million in the independent group. Hence, a party might well have a majority among the wage workers but a minority among the population as a whole." (p. 33).

This is an example of Kautsky's manner of argument. Is it not the counter-revolutionary whining of a bourgeois? Why, Mr. Kautsky, have you relegated all in the "independent" group to the category of the disfranchised, when you know very well that the overwhelming majority of the Russian peasants do not employ hired labour, and do not, therefore, lose their political rights? Is this not falsification?

• A semi-literate character in Gogol's *Dead Souls*, who reads everything mechanically, syllable by syllable, not understanding anything.—Ed.

Why, oh learned economist, did you not quote the facts with which you are perfectly familiar and which are to be found in those same German statistical returns for 1907 relating to hired labour in agriculture according to size of farms? Why did you not quote these facts for the benefit of the German workers, the readers of your pamphlet, and thus enable them to see how many exploiters there are, and how few they are compared with the total number of "farmers" who figure in German statistics?

Because your renegacy has transformed you into a mere sycophant of the bourgeoisie.

The term capitalist, don't you see, is legally a vague concept, and Kautsky for the space of several pages thunders against the "tyranny" of the Soviet Constitution. This "serious scholar" has no objection to the British bourgeoisie taking several centuries to work out and develop a new (new for the Middle Ages)) bourgeois constitution, but, representative of lackey's science as he is, he will allow no time to us, the workers and peasants of Russia. He expects us to have a constitution all complete to the very last words in a few months...

"Tyranny!" Consider what a depth of vile subserviency to the bourgeoisie and idiotic pedantry is contained in such a reproach. When thoroughly bourgeois and for the most part reactionary lawyers in the capitalist countries have for centuries or decades been drawing up most detailed rules and regulations and writing hundreds of volumes of laws and intepretations of laws to oppress the workers, to bind the poor man hand and foot and to place a hundred and one hindrances and obstacles in the way of the common labouring people—oh, there the bourgeois liberals and Mr. Kautsky see no "tyranny." That is "law" and "order": the ways in which the poor are to be "kept down" have all been thought out and written down. There are thousands and thousands of bourgeois lawyers and bureaucrats (about them Kautsky says nothing at all, probably just because Marx attached enormous significance to smashing the bureaucratic machine...)lawyers and bureaucrats who are able to interpret the laws in such a way that the worker and the average peasant can never break through the barbed-wire entanglements of these laws. This, of course, is not "tyranny" on the part of the bourgeoisie, it is not the dictatorship of the sordid and self-seeking exploiters who are sucking the blood of the people. Oh, no! It is "pure democracy," which is becoming purer and purer every day.

But now that the toiling and exploited classes, for the first time in history, while cut off by the imperialist war from their brothers across the frontier, have set up their own Soviets, have called to the work of political construction those masses which the bourgeoisie used to oppress, grind and stupefy, and have begun themselves to build a new, proletarian state, have begun in the heat of furious struggle, in the fire of civil war, to sketch the fundamental principles of a state without exploiters—all the scoundrelly bourgeois, the whole gang of blood-suckers, with Kautsky echoing them, howl about "tyranny"! Indeed, how will these ignorant people, these workers and peasants, this "riff-raff," be able to interpret their laws? How can these common labourers acquire a sense of justice without the counsel of educated lawyers, of bourgeois writers, of the Kautskys and the wise old bureaucrats?

Mr. Kautsky quotes from my speech of April 29, 1918,\* the words: "The masses themselves determine the procedure and the time of elections." And Kautsky, the "pure democrat," infers from this:

"... Hence, it would mean that every assembly of electors may determine the procedure of elections at their own discretion. Tyranny and the opportunity of getting rid of undesirable opposition elements in the ranks of the proletariat itself would thus be carried to a high degree" (p. 37).

Well, how does this differ from the talk of a hired capitalist hack who howls about the masses oppressing "industrious" workers who are "willing to work" during a strike? Why is the bourgeois bureaucratic method of determining electoral procedure under "pure," bourgeois democracy not tyranny? Why should the sense of justice among the masses who have risen to fight their age-long exploiters and who are being educated and steeled in this desperate struggle be lower than that of a handful of bureaucrats, intellectuals and lawyers who are steeped in bourgeois prejudices?

Kautsky is a true Socialist. Don't dare suspect the sincerity of this very respectable father of a family, of this very honest citizen. He is an ardent and convinced supporter of the victory of the workers, of the proletarian revolution. All he wants is that the sentimental petty-bourgeois intellectuals and philistines in nightcaps should first of all—before the masses begin to move, before they enter into furious battle with the exploiters, and certainly without civil war—draw up a moderate and precise set of rules for the development of the revolution....

<sup>•</sup> See V. I. Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. XXII (Russian ed.).—Ed.

Burning with profound moral indignation, our most learned Judas Golovlev \* tells the German workers that on June 14, 1918, the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of the Soviets resolved to expel the representatives of the Right Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties from the Soviets.<sup>80</sup> "This measure," writes Judas Kautsky, all afire with noble indignation, "is not directed against definite persons guilty of definite punishable offenses.... The Constitution of the Soviet Republic does not contain a single word about the immunity of Soviet deputies. It is not definite persons, but definite parties, that are expelled from the Soviets" (p. 37).

Yes, that is really awful, an intolerable departure from pure democracy, according to the rules of which our revolutionary Judas Kautsky will make the revolution. We Russian Bolsheviks should first have guaranteed immunity to the Savinkovs and Co., to the Lieberdans,<sup>81</sup> Potresovs ("activists") <sup>82</sup> and Co., then drawn up a criminal code proclaiming participation in the Czechoslovakian counter-revolutionary war, or in the alliance with the German imperialists in the Ukraine or in Georgia against the workers of one's own country to be "punishable offences," and only then, on the basis of this criminal code, should we have been justified, in accordance with the principles of "pure democracy," in expelling "definite persons" from the Soviets. It goes without saying that the Czechoslovaks, who were subsidised by the British and French capitalists through the medium, or thanks to the agitation of the Savinkovs, Potresovs and Lieberdans, and the Krasnovs, who received shells from the Germans through the medium of the Ukrainian and Tiflis Mensheviks, would have sat quietly waiting until we were ready with our proper criminal code, and, like the purest democrats they are, would have confined themselves to the role of an "opposition."

No less moral indignation is aroused in Kautsky's breast by the fact that the Soviet Constitution disfranchises all those who "employ hired labour with a view to profit." "A home-worker, or a small master employing only one journeyman," Kautsky writes, "may live and feel quite like a proletarian, but he has no vote!" (p. 36).

What a departure from "pure democracy"! What an injustice!

True, up to now all Marxists have thought—and thousands of facts have proved it—that the small masters were the most unscrupulous

<sup>\*</sup>The chief personage in a novel by the Russian satirist, Saltykov-Shchedrin, The Golovlev Family—a treacherous canting hypocrite.—Ed.

and grasping exploiters of hired labour, but our Judas Kautsky takes the small masters not as a class (who invented the pernicious theory of the class struggle?) but as single individuals, exploiters who "live and feel quite like proletarians." The famous "thrifty Agnes," who was considered dead and buried long ago, has come to life again under Kautsky's pen. This "thrifty Agnes" was invented and launched into German literature some decades ago by that "pure" democrat and bourgeois Eugen Richter. He predicted untold calamities that would follow the dictatorship of the proletariat, the confiscation of the capital of the exploiters, and asked with an innocent air: what was a capitalist in the legal sense of the term? He took as an example a poor, thrifty seamstress ("thrifty Agnes"), whom the wicked "dictators of the proletariat" rob of her last farthing. There was a time when the whole German Social-Democracy used to poke fun at this "thrifty Agnes" of the pure democrat, Eugen Richter. But that was a long, long time ago, when Bebel, who frankly and bluntly declared that there were many National-Liberals in his party, was still alive; that was very long ago, when Kautsky was not yet a renegade.

Now "thrifty Agnes" has come to life again in the person of the "small master who lives and feels quite like a proletarian," and who employs "only one" journeyman. The wicked Bolsheviks are wronging him, depriving him of his vote! It is true that "every assembly of electors in the Soviet Republic," as Kautsky tells us, "may admit into its midst a poor little master who, for instance, may be connected with this or that factory, if, by way of an exception, he is not an exploiter, and if he really "lives and feels quite like a proletarian." But can one rely on the knowledge of life, on the sense of justice of an irregular factory meeting of common workers acting (oh horror!) without a written code? Would it not clearly be better to grant the vote to all exploiters, to all who employ hired labour, rather than risk the possibility of "thrifty Agnes" and the "small master who lives and feels quite like a proletarian" being wronged by the workers?

Let the contemptible scoundrels and renegades, amidst the applause of the bourgeoisie and the social-chauvinists,\* abuse our Soviet Con-

<sup>\*</sup>I have just read a leading article in the Frankfurter Zeitung of October 22, 1918, giving an enthusiastic summary of Kautsky's pamphlet. This organ of the Stock Exchange is satisfied. And no wonder! And a comrade writes to me from Berlin that the Vorwärts, the organ of the Scheidemanns, has declared in a special article that it subscribes to almost every line Kautsky has written. Congratulations!

stitution for disfranchising the exploiters! That is well, because it will accelerate and widen the split between the revolutionary workers of Europe and the Scheidemanns and Kautskys, the Renaudels and Longuets, the Hendersons and Ramsay MacDonalds, and all the old leaders and old betrayers of socialism.

The masses of the oppressed classes, the class-conscious and honest revolutionary proletarian leaders, will be on our side. It will be sufficient to acquaint such proletarians and such masses with our Soviet Constitution for them to say at once: "These are really our people, this is a real workers' party, this is a real workers' government; for it does not deceive the workers by talking about reforms in the way all the above-mentioned leaders have done, but is seriously fighting the exploiters, is seriously making a revolution, and is really fighting for the complete emancipation of the working class."

The fact that after twelve months' "experience" the Soviets are depriving the exploiters of the franchise shows that the Soviets are really organisations of the oppressed masses and not of social-imperialists and social-pacifists who have sold themselves to the bourgeoisie. The fact that the Soviets have disfranchised the exploiters shows that they are not organs of petty-bourgeois compromise with the capitalists, not organs of parliamentary chatter (on the part of the Kautskys, the Longuets and the MacDonalds), but organs of the genuinely revolutionary proletariat which is waging a life and death struggle against the exploiters.

"Kautsky's pamphlet is almost unknown here," a well-informed comrade in Berlin wrote to me a few days ago (today is October 30). I would advise our ambassadors in Germany and Switzerland not to stint a thousand or so in buying up this book and distributing it gratis among the class-conscious workers in order to trample in the mud this "European"—read: imperialist and reformist—Social-Democracy, which has long been a "stinking corpse."

At the end of his book, on pages 61 and 63, Mr. Kautsky bitterly laments the fact that the "new theory" (as he calls Bolshevism, fearing even to touch Marx's and Engels' analysis of the Paris Commune) "finds supporters even in old democracies like Switzerland, for instance." Kautsky "cannot understand how this theory can be adopted by German Social-Democrats."

No, it is quite understandable; for after the serious lessons of the

war the revolutionary masses are becoming sick and tired of the Scheidemanns and the Kautskys.

"We" have always been in favour of democracy, Kautsky writes;

yet we are supposed suddenly to have renounced it?

"We," the opportunists of Social-Democracy, have always been opposed to the dictatorship of the proletariat, and Kolb and Co. proclaimed this long ago. Kautsky knows this and it is futile for him to imagine that he can conceal from his readers the obvious fact that he has "returned to the fold" of the Bernsteins and Kolbs.

"We," the revolutionary Marxists, have never made a fetish of "pure" (bourgeois) democracy. As is known, in 1903 Plekhanov was a revolutionary Marxist (before his lamentable turn, which brought him to the position of a Russian Scheidemann). And in that year Plekhanov declared at the congress of our party, which was then adopting its program, that in the revolution the proletariat would, if necessary, disfranchise the capitalists and disperse any parliament that was found to be counter-revolutionary. That this is the only view that corresponds to Marxism will be clear to anybody even from the statements of Marx and Engels which I have quoted above; it follows logically from all the fundamental principles of Marxism.

"We," the revolutionary Marxists, never made the speeches to the people that the Kautskians of all nations love to make, cringing before the bourgeoisie, adapting themselves to bourgeois parliamentarism, keeping silent about the bourgeois character of modern democracy and demanding only its extension, only that it be carried to its logical conclusion.

"We" said to the bourgeoisie: "You, exploiters and hypocrites, talk about democracy, while at every step you create a thousand and one obstacles to prevent the oppressed masses from taking part in politics. We take you at your word and, in the interest of these masses, demand the extension of your bourgeois democracy in order to prepare the masses for revolution for the purpose of overthrowing you, the exploiters. And if you exploiters attempt to offer resistance to our proletarian revolution we will ruthlessly suppress you; we will deprive you of all rights; more than that, we will not give you any bread, for in our proletarian republic the exploiters will have no rights, they will be deprived of fire and water, for we are Socialists in real earnest, and not of the Scheidemann, Kautsky type."

That is what "we," the revolutionary Marxists, said, and will say

—and that is why the oppressed masses will support us and be with us, while the Scheidemanns and the Kautskys will be swept into the renegades' cesspool.

## WHAT IS INTERNATIONALISM?

Kautsky is quite convinced that he is an internationalist and calls himself one. The Scheidemanns he calls "government Socialists." But in defending the Mensheviks (he does not openly express his solidarity with them, but he entirely expresses their views), Kautsky has glaringly revealed the sort of "internationalism" he subscribes to. And since Kautsky is not alone, but is the representative of a trend which inevitably grew up in the atmosphere of the Second International (Longuet in France, Turati in Italy, Nobs and Grimm, Grabber and Naine in Switzerland, Ramsay MacDonald in England, etc.), it will be instructive to dwell on Kautsky's "internationalism."

After emphasising that the Mensheviks also attended the Zimmer-wald Conference (a diploma, certainly, but a tainted one), Kautsky sets forth the views on the Mensheviks, with whom he agrees, in the following manner:

"... The Mensheviks wanted a general peace. They wanted all the belligerents to adopt the formula: No annexations and no indemnities. Until this had been achieved, the Russian army, according to this view, was to stand ready for battle. The Bolsheviks, on the other hand, demanded an immediate peace at any price; they were prepared, if need be, to make a separate peace; they tried to extort it by force by increasing the state of disorganisation of the army, which was already bad enough" (p. 27).

In Kautsky's opinion the Bolsheviks should not have taken power, and should have been satisfied with a Constituent Assembly.

Thus, the internationalism of Kautsky and the Mensheviks amounted to this: to demand reforms from the imperialist bourgeois government, but to continue to support it, and to continue to support the war that this government was waging until all the belligerents had accepted the formula: "no annexations and no indemnities." This view was repeatedly expressed by Turati, and by the Kautskians (Haase and others), and by Longuet and Co., who declared that they stood for "defence of the fatherland."

Theoretically, this shows a complete inability to dissociate oneself

from the social-chauvinists and complete confusion on the question of the defence of the fatherland. Politically, it means substituting petty-bourgeois nationalism for internationalism, and deserting to the reformists' camp and renouncing revolution.

From the point of view of the proletariat, recognising "defence of the fatherland" means justifying the present war, admitting that it is legitimate. And since the war remains an imperialist war (both under a monarchy and under a republic), irrespective of the territory—mine or the enemy's—occupied by the enemy troops at the given moment, recognising defence of the fatherland is tantamount in fact to supporting the imperialist, predatory bourgeoisie, and to an utter betrayal of socialism. In Russia, even under Kerensky, under the bourgeoisdemocratic republic, the war continued to be an imperialist war, for it was being waged by the bourgeoisie as a ruling class (war is the "continuation of politics"); and a very striking expression of the imperialist character of the war was the secret treaties for the partitioning of the world and the plunder of other countries which had been concluded by the ex-tsar with the capitalists of England and France.

The Mensheviks deceived the people in a most despicable manner by calling this war a defensive or revolutionary war. And by approving the policy of the Mensheviks, Kautsky is approving the deception practised on the people, is approving the part played by the petty bourgeoisie in helping capital to trick the workers and to harness them to the chariot of the imperialists. Kautsky is pursuing a characteristically petty-bourgeois philistine policy by pretending (and trying to make the masses believe the absurd idea) that putting forward a slogan alters the position. The entire history of bourgeois democracy refutes this illusion; the bourgeois democrats have always advanced, and still advance, all sorts of "slogans" in order to deceive the people. The point is to test their sincerity, to compare their words with their deeds, not to be satisfied with idealistic or charlatan phrases, but to get down to class reality. An imperialist war does not cease to be an imperialist war when charlatans or phrasemongers or petty-bourgeois philistines put forward sentimental "slogans," but only when the class which is conducting the imperialist war, and is bound to it by millions of economic threads (and even ropes), is really overthrown and is replaced at the helm of state by the really revolutionary class, the proletariat. There is no other way of getting out of an imperialist war, or out of imperialist predatory peace.

By approving the foreign policy of the Mensheviks, and by declaring it to be internationalist and Zimmerwaldian, Kautsky, first, reveals the utter rottenness of the opportunist Zimmerwald majority (it was not without reason that we, the *Left* Zimmerwaldians, at once dissociated ourselves from such a majority!), and, secondly—and this is the chief thing—passes from the position of the proletariat to the position of the petty bourgeoisie, from the revolutionary position to the reformist position.

The proletariat fights for the revolutionary overthrow of the imperialist bourgeoisie; the petty bourgeoisie fights for the reformist "improvement" of imperialism, for adaptation and submission to it. When Kautsky was still a Marxist, for example, in 1909, when he wrote his Road to Power, it was the idea that war would inevitably lead to revolution that he expounded, and he spoke of the approach of an era of revolutions. The Basle Manifesto \* of 1912 plainly and definitely speaks of a proletarian revolution in connection with that very imperialist war between the German and the British groups which actually broke out in 1914. But in 1918, when revolutions did begin in connection with war, Kautsky, instead of explaining that they were inevitable, instead of pondering over and thinking out the revolutionary tactics and the means and methods of preparing for revolution, began to describe the reformist tactics of the Mensheviks as internationalism. Is not this renegacy?

Kautsky praises the Mensheviks for having insisted on maintaining the fighting efficiency of the army, and he blames the Bolsheviks for having increased the state of "disorganisation of the army," which was already disorganised enough as it was. This means praising reformism and submission to the imperialist bourgeoisie, and blaming and abjuring revolution. For under Kerensky the maintenance of the fighting efficiency of the army meant its maintenance under bourgeois (albeit republican) command. Everybody knows, and the progress of events has confirmed it, that this republican army preserved the Kornilov spirit, because the commanding staff was Kornilovist. The bourgeois officers could not help being Kornilovists; they could not help gravitating towards imperialism and towards the forcible suppression of the proletariat. All that the Menshevik tactics amounted to in practice was to leave all the foundations of the imperialist war and all the

<sup>\*</sup> See V. I. Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. XVIII (International Publishers, N. Y.), p. 468.—Ed.

foundations of the *bourgeois* dictatorship intact, to patch up details and to daub over a few trifles ("reforms").

On the other hand, not a single great revolution has ever taken place, or ever will take place, without the "disorganisation" of the army. For the army is the most rigid instrument for supporting the old regime, the most hardened bulwark of bourgeois discipline, buttressing the rule of capital, and preserving among the working people and imbuing them with the servile spirit of submission and subjection to capital. Counter-revolution has never tolerated, and never could tolerate, armed workers side by side with the army. In France, Engels wrote, after every revolution the workers were armed; "therefore the disarming of the workers was the first commandment for the bourgeois at the helm of the state." 88 The armed workers were the embryo of a new army, the nucleus of the organisation of a new social order. The first commandment of the bourgeoisie was to crush this nucleus and prevent it from growing. The first commandment of every victorious revolution, as Marx and Engels repeatedly emphasised, was to smash the old army, dissolve it and replace it by a new one. 84 A new social class, when rising to power, never could, and cannot now, attain power and consolidate it except by completely disintegrating the old army ("Disorganisation!" the reactionary or just cowardly philistines howl on this score), except by passing through a most difficult and painful period without any army (the Great French Revolution also passed through such a painful period), and by gradually building up, in the midst of stern civil war, a new army, a new discipline, a new military organisation of the new class. Formerly, Kautsky the historian understood this. Kautsky the renegade has forgotten it.

What right has Kautsky to call the Scheidemanns "government Socialists" if he approves of the tactics of the Mensheviks in the Russian revolution? In supporting Kerensky and joining his Ministry, the Mensheviks were also government Socialists. Kautsky cannot wriggle out of this conclusion if he attempts to raise the question of the ruling class which is waging the imperialist war. But Kautsky avoids raising the question of the ruling class, a question that is imperative for a Marxist, for the mere raising of it would expose the renegade.

The Kautskians in Germany, the Longuetists in France, and the Turatis and Co. in Italy argue in this way: Socialism presupposes the equality and freedom of nations, their self-determination; hence, when our country is attacked, or when enemy troops invade our territory,

it is the right and duty of the Socialists to defend their country. But theoretically such an argument is either a sheer mockery of socialism or a fraudulent evasion, while from the point of view of practical politics, it coincides with that of the quite ignorant muzhik who has even no conception of the social, class character of the war, and of the tasks of a revolutionary party during a reactionary war.

Socialism is opposed to violence against nations. That is indisputable. But socialism is opposed to violence against men in general. Apart from Christian-Anarchists and Tolstoyans, however, no one has yet drawn the conclusion from this that socialism is opposed to revolutionary violence. Hence, to talk about "violence" in general, without examining the conditions which distinguish reactionary from revolutionary violence, means being a petty bourgeois who renounces revolution, or else it means simply deceiving oneself and others by sophistry.

The same holds true of violence against nations. Every war implies violence against nations, but that does not prevent Socialists from being in favour of a revolutionary war. The class character of the war—that is the fundamental question which confronts a Socialist (if he is not a renegade). The imperialist war of 1914-18 is a war between two coalitions of the imperialist bourgeoisie for the partitioning of the world, for the division of the booty, and for the plunder and strangulation of small and weak nations. This was the appraisal of war given in the Basle Manifesto in 1912, and it has been confirmed by the facts. Whoever departs from this view of war ceases to be a Socialist.

If a German under Wilhelm or a Frenchman under Clemenceau says, "It is my right and duty as a Socialist to defend my country if it is invaded by an enemy," he argues not like a Socialist, not like an internationalist, not like a revolutionary proletarian, but like a petty-bourgeois nationalist. Because this argument leaves out of account the revolutionary class struggle of the workers against capital, it leaves out of account the appraisal of the war as a whole from the point of view of the world bourgeoisie and the world proletariat, that is, it leaves out of account internationalism, and all that remains is a miserable and narrow-minded nationalism. My country is being wronged, that is all I care about—that is what this argument reduces itself to, and that is where its petty-bourgeois nationalist narrow-mindedness lies. It is the same as if in regard to individual violence, violence against an individual, one were to argue that socialism is

opposed to violence and therefore I would rather be a traitor than go to prison.

The Frenchman, German or Italian who says, "Socialism is opposed to violence against nations, therefore I defend myself when my country is invaded," betrays socialism and internationalism, because he only thinks of his own "country," he puts "his own"..."bourgeoisie" above everything else and does not give a thought to the international connections which make the war an imperialist war and his bourgeoisie a link in the chain of imperialist plunder.

All philistines and all stupid and ignorant yokels argue in the same way as the renegade Kautskians, Longuetists, Turatis and Co.: "The enemy has invaded my country; I do not care about anything else." \*

The Socialist, the revolutionary proletarian, the internationalist, argues differently. He says: "The character of the war (whether reactionary or revolutionary) is not determined by who the aggressor was, or whose territory the 'enemy' occupied; it is determined by the class that is waging the war, and the politics of which this war is a continuation. If the war is a reactionary, imperialist war, that is, if it is being waged by two world coalitions of the imperialist, violent, predatory, reactionary bourgeoisie, then every bourgeoisie (even of the smallest country) becomes a participant in the plunder, and my duty as a representative of the revolutionary proletariat is to prepare for the world proletarian revolution as the only escape from the horrors of a world war. I must argue, not from the point of view of 'my' country (for that is the argument of a poor, stupid, nationalist philistine who does not realise that he is only a plaything in the hands of the imperialist bourgeoisie), but from the point of view of my share in the preparation, in the propaganda, and in the acceleration of the world proletarian revolution."

That is what internationalism means, and that is the duty of the internationalist, of the revolutionary worker, of the genuine Socialist. That is the ABC that Kautsky the renegade has "forgotten." And

The social-chauvinists (the Scheidemanns, Renaudels, Hendersons, Gomperses and Co.) absolutely refuse to talk about the "International" during the war. They regard the enemies of their respective bourgeoisies as "traitors" to ... socialism. They support the policy of conquest pursued by their respective bourgeoisies. The social-pacifists i.e., Socialists in words and petty-bourgeois pacifists in practice) express all sorts of "internationalist" sentiments, protest against annexations, etc., but in practice they continue to support their respective imperialist bourgeoisies. The difference between the two types is slight, it is like the difference between two capitalists—one with rude, and the other with sweet words on his lips.

his renegacy becomes still more palpable when he passes from approving the tactics of the petty-bourgeois nationalists (the Mensheviks in Russia, the Longuetists in France, the Turatis in Italy, and Haases and Co. in Germany), to criticising the Bolshevik tactics. Here is his criticism:

"The Bolshevik revolution was based on the assumption that it would become the starting point of a general European revolution, that the bold initiative of Russia would rouse the proletarians of all Europe to insurrection.

"On this assumption it was, of course, immaterial what forms the Russian separate peace would take, what hardships and territorial mutilations [Verstümmelungen] it would cause the Russian people, and what interpretation of the self-determination of nations it would give. It was also immaterial whether Russia was able to defend herself or not. According to this opinion, the European revolution would be the best protection of the Russian revolution, and would bring complete and genuine self-determination to all the peoples inhabiting the former Russian territory.

"A revolution in Europe, which would establish and consolidate the socialist order there, would also become the means of removing the obstacles to the introduction of the socialist system of production that would arise in Russia owing to the economic backwardness of the country.

"All this would be very logical and very sound if the main assumption were granted, viz., that the Russian revolution would infallibly let loose a European revolution. But what if that did not happen?

"So far the assumption has not been justified. And the proletarians of Europe are now being accused of having abandoned and betrayed the Russian revolution. This is an accusation levelled against unknown persons, for who is to be held responsible for the behaviour of the European proletariat?" (p. 28.)

And Kautsky then goes on to repeat again and again that Marx, Engels, and Bebel were more than once mistaken about the advent of revolutions they had anticipated, but that they never based their tactics on the expectation of a revolution at a "definite date" (p. 29), whereas, he says, the Bolsheviks "staked everything on one card, on a general European revolution."

We have deliberately quoted this long passage in order to show our readers with what "agility" Kautsky counterfeits Marxism by palming off his banal and reactionary philistine view in its stead.

First, to ascribe to an opponent an obvious stupidity and then to refute it is a trick that is played by not over-clever people. If the Bolshe-

viks had based their tactics on the expectation of a revolution in other countries by a definite date, that would have been an undeniable stupidity. But the Bolshevik Party has never been guilty of such stupidity. In my letter to the American workers (August 20, 1918),\* I expressly guard against anything so foolish by saying that we counted on an American revolution, but not by any definite date. I propounded the very same idea more than once in my controversy with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and the "Left Communists" (January-March 1918). Kautsky has committed a slight...just a very slight forgery, on which he in fact based his criticism of Bolshevism. Kautsky has confused tactics based on the expectation of a European revolution in the more or less early future, but not at a definite date, with tactics based on the expectation of a European revolution at a definite date. A slight, just a very slight forgery!

The last-named tactics are foolish. The first-named are obligatory for a Marxist, for every revolutionary proletarian and internationalist; —obligatory, because they alone take into account in a proper Marxian way the objective situation brought about by the war in all European countries, and they alone conform to the international tasks of the proletariat.

By substituting the petty question about an error which the Bolshevik revolutionaries might have made, but did not, for the important question of the foundations of revolutionary tactics in general, Kautsky adroitly abjures all revolutionary tactics!

A renegade in politics, he is unable even to present the question of the objective prerequisites of revolutionary tactics theoretically.

And this brings us to the second point.

Secondly, it is obligatory for a Marxist to count on a European revolution if a revolutionary situation exists. It is an elementary axiom of Marxism that the tactics of the socialist proletariat cannot be the same both when there is a revolutionary situation and when there is no revolutionary situation.

If Kautsky had put this question, which is obligatory for a Marxist, he would have seen that the answer was absolutely against him. Long before the war, all Marxists, all Socialists, were agreed that a European war would create a revolutionary situation. Kautsky himself, before he became a renegade, clearly and definitely admitted this—in 1902 (in his Social Revolution) and in 1909 (in his Road to Power). It

<sup>•</sup> See pages 192-204 in this volume.—Ed.

was also admitted in the name of the entire Second International in the Basle Manifesto; it is not without reason that the social-chauvinists and Kautskians (the "Centrists," i.e., those who waver between the revolutionaries and the opportunists) of all countries shun like the plague the declarations of the Basle Manifesto on this score.

Hence, the expectation of a revolutionary situation in Europe was not an infatuation of the Bolsheviks, but the general opinion of all Marxists. When Kautsky tries to escape from this undoubted truth with the help of such phrases as that the Bolsheviks "always believed in the omnipotence of force and will," he simply utters a sonorous and empty phrase to cover up his evasion, a shameful evasion, of the question of a revolutionary situation.

To proceed. Has a revolutionary situation begun or not? Kautsky did not present even this question. The economic facts provide an answer: the famine and ruin created everywhere by the war imply a revolutionary situation. The political facts also provide an answer: ever since 1915 a splitting process is clearly to be observed in all countries among the old and decaying Socialist parties, a process of departure of the masses of the proletariat from the social-chauvinist leaders to the Left, to revolutionary ideas and sentiments, to revolutionary leaders.

Only a person who dreads revolution and betrays it could have failed to note these facts on August 5, 1918, when Kautsky was writing his pamphlet. And now, at the end of October 1918, the revolution is growing in a number of European countries, and growing very rapidly under our very eyes.\* Kautsky the "revolutionary," who still wants to be regarded as a Marxist, has proved to be a short-sighted philistine, who, like these philistines of 1847 whom Marx ridiculed, did not see the approaching revolution!

And now we come to the third point.

Thirdly, what should be the specific features of revolutionary tactics in a European revolutionary situation? Having become a renegade, Kautsky feared to put this question, which is obligatory for every Marxist. Kautsky argues like a typical philistine petty bourgeois, or like an ignorant peasant: has a "general European revolution" begun or not? If it has, then he too is prepared to become a revolutionary! But then, let us observe, every blackguard (like the scoundrels

<sup>\*</sup>Within ten days after these lines were written, the German monarchy was overthrown, and revolutionary uprisings occurred in several European countries.—Ed.

who are now trying to attach themselves to the victorious Bolsheviks) would proclaim himself a revolutionary!

If it has not, then Kautsky will turn his back on revolution! Kautsky does not betray a shadow of an understanding of the truth that a revolutionary Marxist differs from the ordinary philistine by his ability to preach to the uneducated masses that the maturing revolution is necessary, to prove that it is inevitable, to explain its benefits to the people, and to prepare the proletariat and all the toiling and exploited masses for it.

Kautsky ascribed to the Bolsheviks an absurdity, namely, that they had staked everything on one card, on a European revolution breaking out at a definite date. This absurdity has turned against Kautsky himself, because the logical conclusion of his argument is that the tactics of the Bolsheviks would have been correct if a European revolution had broken out by August 5, 1918! That is the date Kautsky mentions as the time he wrote his pamphlet. And when, a few weeks after this August 5, it became clear that revolution was impending in a number of European countries, the whole renegacy of Kautsky, his whole falsification of Marxism, and his utter inability to reason or even to present questions in a revolutionary manner, became revealed in all their charm.

When the proletarians of Europe are accused of treachery, Kautsky writes, it is an accusation levelled at unknown persons.

You are mistaken, Mr. Kautsky! Look in the mirror and you will see those "unknown persons" against whom this accusation is levelled. Kautsky assumes an air of innocence and pretends not to understand who levelled the accusation, and its meaning. As a matter of fact Kautsky knows perfectly well that the accusation has been and is being levelled by the German "Lefts," by the Spartacists, by Lieb-knecht and his friends. The accusation expresses a clear appreciation of that fact that the German proletariat betrayed the Russian (and international) revolution when it strangled Finland, the Ukraine, Latvia and Esthonia.\* This accusation is levelled primarily and above all not against the masses, who are always downtrodden, but against those leaders who, like the Scheidemanns and the Kautskys, failed in

<sup>•</sup> In Finland, Esthonia, and Latvia the German military units aided the bourgeoisie and the landlords to crush the victorious revolutionary movement, and in the Ukraine it helped the counter-revolutionary nationalists to defeat for a time the young Soviet Power.—Ed.

their duty to carry on revolutionary agitation, revolutionary propaganda and revolutionary work among the masses to overcome their inertness, who in fact worked against the revolutionary instincts and aspirations which are always aglow deep down among the masses of the oppressed class. The Scheidemanns bluntly, crudely, cynically, and in most cases from corrupt motives betrayed the proletariat and deserted to the bourgeoisie. The Kautskians and the Longuetists did the same thing, only hesitatingly and haltingly, and casting cowardly side-glances at those who were stronger at the moment. In all his writings during the war Kautsky tried to extinguish the revolutionary spirit, instead of fostering and fanning it.

The fact that Kautsky does not even understand the enormous theoretical importance, and the even greater agitational and propaganda importance, of the "accusation" that the proletarians of Europe have betrayed the Russian Revolution will remain a regular historical monument to the philistine stupidity of the "average" leader of German official Social-Democracy! Kautsky does not understand that, owing to the censorship prevailing in the German "Empire," this "accusation" is perhaps the only form in which the German Socialists who have not betrayed socialism—Liebknecht and his friends—could express their appeal to the German workers to throw off the Scheidemanns and the Kautskys, to push aside such "leaders," to emancipate themselves from their stultifying and vulgar propaganda, to rise in revolt in spite of them, without them, and over their heads. It was the call for revolution!

Kautsky does not understand this. How is he to understand the tactics of the Bolshevists? Can a man who renounces revolution in general be expected to weigh and appraise the conditions of the development of revolution in one of its most "difficult" cases?

The tactics of the Bolsheviks were correct; they were the *only* internationalist tactics, because they were based, not on the cowardly fear of a world revolution, not on a philistine "disbelief" in it, not on the narrow nationalist desire to protect one's "own" fatherland (the fatherland of one's own bourgeoisie), while not "caring a hang" for all the rest, but on a correct (and, before the war and before the renegacy of the social-chauvinists and social-pacifists, a universally admitted) estimation of the revolutionary situation in Europe. These tactics were the only internationalist tactics, because they did the ut-

most possible in one country for the development, support and awakening of the revolution in all countries. The correctness of these tactics has been confirmed by their enormous success, for Bolshevism (not by any means because of the merits of the Russian Bolsheviks, but because of the most profound sympathy of the masses everywhere for tactics that are revolutionary in practice) has become world Bolshevism, has produced an idea, a theory, a programme and tactics, which differ concretely and practically from those of social-chauvinism and social-pacifism. Bolshevism has vanquished the old, decayed International of the Scheidemanns and Kautskys, Renaudels and Longuets, Hendersons and the MacDonalds, who henceforth will be treading on each other's heels, dreaming about "unity" and trying to revive a corpse. Bolshevism has created the ideological and tactical foundations of a Third International, of a really proletarian and Communist International, which will take into consideration both the gains of the peaceful epoch and the experience of the epoch of revolution, which has now begun.

Bolshevism has popularised throughout the world the idea of the "dictatorship of the proletariat," has translated these words from the Latin, first into Russian, and then into all the languages of the world, and has shown by the living example of the Soviet government that the workers and poor peasants, even of a backward country, even with the least experience, education and habits of organisation, have been able for a whole year, amidst gigantic difficulties and amidst a struggle against the exploiters (who were supported by the bourgeoisie of the whole world) to maintain the power of the toilers, to create a democracy that is immeasurably higher and broader than all previous democracies in the world, and to start the creative work of tens of millions of workers and peasants for the practical realisation of socialism.

Bolshevism has helped in fact to develop the proletarian revolution in Europe and America more powerfully than any party in any other country has so far succeeded in doing. While the workers of the whole world are realising more and more clearly every day that the tactics of the Scheidemanns and Kautsky have not delivered them from the imperialist war and from wage-slavery to the imperialist bourgeoisie, and that these tactics cannot serve as a model for all countries, the masses of the proletarians of all countries are realising more and more clearly every day that Bolshevism has indicated the

right road of escape from the horrors of war and imperialism, that Bolshevism can serve as a model of tactics for all.

Not only the general European, but the world proletarian revolution is maturing before the eyes of all, and it has been assisted, accelerated and supported by the victory of the proletariat in Russia. All this is not enough for the complete victory of socialism, you say? Of course it is not enough. One country alone cannot do more. But this one country, thanks to the Soviet form of government, has done so much that even if the Russian Soviet government were to be crushed by world imperialism tomorrow, as a result, let us say, of an agreement between German and Anglo-French imperialism—even granted that worst possibility—it would still be found that Bolshevik tactics have brought enormous benefit to socialism and have assisted the growth of the invincible world revolution.

## SUBSERVIENCY TO THE BOURGEOISIE IN THE GUISE OF "ECONOMIC ANALYSIS"

As has been said already, if the title of Kautsky's book were properly to reflect its contents, it should have been called, not The Dictatorship of the Proletariat, but A Rehash of Bourgeois Attacks on the Bolsheviks.

The old Menshevik "theories" about the bourgeois character of the Russian revolution, i.e., the old misinterpretation of Marxism by the Mensheviks (rejected by Kautsky in 1905!) are now once again being hashed up by our theoretician. We must deal with this question, however tedious it may be for Russian Marxists.

The Russian revolution is a bourgeois revolution, said all the Marxists of Russia before 1905. The Mensheviks, substituting liberalism for Marxism, drew the conclusion from this that, hence, the proletariat must not go beyond what was acceptable to the bourgeoisie and must pursue a policy of compromise with it. The Bolsheviks said that this was a bourgeois-liberal theory. The bourgeoisie, they said, was trying to bring about the reform of the state on bourgeois, reformist, not revolutionary lines, while preserving the monarchy, landlordism, etc., as far as possible. The proletariat must carry through the bourgeois-democratic revolution to the end, not allowing itself to be "bound" by the reformism of the bourgeoisie. The Bolsheviks formulated the relation of class forces in the bourgeois revolution as follows: the

proletariat, joining to itself the peasantry, will neutralise the liberal bourgeoisie and utterly destroy the monarchy, mediævalism and landlordism.

The alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry in general reveals the bourgeois character of the revolution, for the peasantry in general are small producers who stand on the basis of commodity production. Further, the Bolsheviks then added, the proletariat will join to itself the entire semi-proletariat (all the toilers and exploited), will neutralise the middle peasantry and overthrow the bourgeoisie; this will be a socialist revolution, as distinct from a bourgeois-democratic revolution (see my pamphlet Two Tactics, published in 1905 and reprinted in Twelve Years, St. Petersburg, 1907.)\*

Kautsky took an indirect part in this controversy in 1905, when, in reply to an inquiry by the Menshevik Plekhanov, he expressed an opinion that was essentially opposed to Plekhanov, which provoked particular ridicule in the Bolshevik press at the time. But now Kautsky does not say a single word about the controversies of that time (for fear of being exposed by his own statements!), and thereby deprives the German reader of all opportunity of understanding the essence of the matter. Mr. Kautsky could not very well tell the German workers in 1918 that in 1905 he had been in favour of an alliance of the workers with the peasants and not with the liberal bourgeoisie, and on what conditions he had advocated this alliance, and what programme he had proposed for it.

Retreating from his old position, Kautsky, under the guise of an "economic analysis," and talking proudly about "historical materialism," now advocates the subordination of the workers to the bourgeoisie, and, with the aid of quotations from the Menshevik Maslov, chews the cud of the old liberal views of the Mensheviks; quotations are further used to prove the brand new idea of the backwardness of Russia; but the deduction drawn from this new idea is the old one that in a bourgeois revolution one must not go further than the bourgeoise! And this in spite of all that Marx and Engels said when comparing the bourgeois revolution of 1789-93 in France with the bourgeois revolution of 1848 in Germany!

Before passing to the chief "argument" and the main content of

<sup>\*</sup> See V. I. Lenin, "The Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution," Collected Works, Vol. VIII, and Selected Works, Vol. III (International Publishers, N. Y.),—Ed.

Kautsky's "economic analysis," let us remark that Kautsky's very first sentences reveal a curious confusion, or superficiality, of thought.

"Agriculture, and precisely small peasant farming," our "theoreti-

"Agriculture, and precisely small peasant farming," our "theoretician" informs us, "to this day represents the economic foundation of Russia. About four-fifths, perhaps even five-sixths, of the population live by it" (p. 45).

First of all, my dear theoretician, have you considered how many exploiters there may be among this mass of small producers? Certainly not more than one-tenth of the total, and in the towns still less, for there large-scale production is more highly developed. Take even an incredibly high figure; assume that one-fifth of the small producers are exploiters who are deprived of the franchise. Even then you will find that the 66 per cent of the votes held by the Bolsheviks at the Fifth Congress of Soviets represented the majority of the population. To this it must be added that there was always a considerable section of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries which was in favour of Soviet government—in principle all the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries were in favour of Soviet government, and when a section of them, in July 1918, started an adventurist revolt, two new parties split away from their old party, viz., the so-called "Narodnik-Communists" and the "Revolutionary Communists" (consisting of the prominent Left Socialist-Revolutionaries who had been nominated for important posts in the government by the old party; to the first-mentioned belonged Zaks, for instance, and to the second Kolegayev). Hence, Kautsky has himself-inadvertently!-refuted the ridiculous fable that the Bolsheviks only have the support of a minority of the population.

Secondly, my dear theoretician, have you considered the fact that the small peasant producer *inevitably* vacillates between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie? This Marxian truth, which has been confirmed by the whole modern history of Europe, Kautsky very conveniently "forgot," for it just demolishes the Menshevik "theory" that he keeps repeating! Had Kautsky not "forgotten" this he could not have denied the need for a proletarian dictatorship in a country in which the small peasant producer predominates.

Let us examine the main content of our theoretician's "economic analysis."

That the Soviet regime is a dictatorship cannot be disputed, says Kautsky. "But is it a dictatorship of the proletariat?" (p. 34).

"According to the Soviet Constitution, the peasants form the majority of the population entitled to participate in legislation and administration. What is presented to us as a dictatorship of the proletariat would be—if carried out consistently, and if, generally speaking, a class could directly exercise a dictatorship, which in reality can only be exercised by a party—a dictatorship of the peasantry" (p. 35).

And, highly elated over so profound and clever an argument, our good Kautsky tries to be witty and says: "It would appear, therefore, that the most painless realisation of socialism is best secured when it is put in the hands of the peasants" (p. 35).

In the greatest detail, and citing extremely learned quotations from the semi-liberal Maslov, our theoretician advances the new idea that the peasants are interested in high grain prices, in low wages for the urban workers, etc., etc. Incidentally, the more tedious the enunciation of these new ideas are, the less attention our author pays to the really new phenomena of the post-war period—such as, for example, that the peasants demand for their grain, not money, but goods, and that they have not enough agricultural implements, which cannot be obtained in sufficient quantities for any amount of money. But of this more anon.

Thus, Kautsky charges the Bolsheviks, the party of the proletariat, with having surrendered the dictatorship, the work of realising socialism, to the petty-bourgeois peasantry. Excellent, Mr. Kautsky! But what, in your enlightened opinion, should have been the attitude of the proletarian party towards the petty-bourgeois peasantry?

Our theoretician preferred to say nothing on this score—evidently bearing in mind the proverb: "Speech is silver, silence is gold." But he gives himself away by the following argument:

"Originally, the peasants' Soviets were organisations of the *peasantry* in general. Now the Soviet Republic proclaims that the Soviets are organisations of the proletarians and the *poor* peasants. The well-to-do peasants are deprived of the suffrage in the elections to the Soviets. The poor peasant is here recognised to be a permanent and mass product of the socialist agrarian reform under the 'dictatorship of the proletariat'" (p. 48).

What deadly irony! It is the kind that may be heard in Russia from the lips of any bourgeois: they all jeer and gloat over the fact that the Soviet Republic openly admits the existence of poor peasants. They laugh at socialism. That is their right. But a "Socialist" who jeers at the fact that after four years of a most ruinous war there should be (and will be for a long time) poor peasants in Russia—such a "Socialist" could only have been born at a time of wholesale renegacy.

Listen further:

"The Soviet Republic interferes in the relations between the rich and poor peasants, but not by redistributing the land. In order to relieve the bread shortage in the towns, detachments of armed workers were sent into the countryside to confiscate the rich peasants' surplus stocks of grain. Part of that stock was distributed among the urban population, another among the poorer peasants" (p. 48).

Of course, Kautsky, the Socialist and Marxist, is profoundly indignant at the idea that such a measure should be extended beyond the environs of the large towns (we have put it into force all over the country). With the matchless, incomparable and admirable coolness (or pig-headedness) of a philistine, Kautsky, the Socialist and Marxist, didactically says:

"It [the expropriation of the well-to-do peasants] introduces a new element of unrest and civil war into the process of production [civil war introduced into the "process of production"—that is something supernatural!] which stands in urgent need of tranquillity and security for its recovery" (p. 49).

Oh, yes, of course, it is quite proper for Kautsky, the Marxist and Socialist, to sigh and shed tears over the subject of tranquillity and security for the exploiters and grain profiteers who hoard their surplus stocks, sabotage the grain monopoly law, and reduce the urban population to famine. "We are all Socialists and Marxists and Internationalists," the Kautskys, Heinrich Webers \* (Vienna), Longuets (Paris), MacDonalds (London), etc., sing in chorus; "we are all in favour of a working-class revolution. Only...only we would like a revolution that does not disturb the tranquillity and security of the grain profiteers. And we camouflage this foul subserviency to the capitalists by a 'Marxist' reference to the 'process of production.' "If this is Marxism, what is servility to the bourgeoisie?

Just see what our theoretician arrives at. He accuses the Bolsheviks of palming off the dictatorship of the peasantry as the dictatorship of the proletariat. But at the same time he accuses us of introducing civil

<sup>\*</sup> Pseudonym for Otto Bauer, Austrian Social-Democratic leader.—Ed.

war into the rural districts (which we think is to our *credit*), of despatching armed detachments of workers into the countryside, who publicly proclaim that they are exercising the "dictatorship of the proletariat and the poor peasantry," assist the latter and confiscate from the profiteers and the rich peasants the surplus stocks of grain which they are hoarding in contravention of the grain monopoly law.

On the one hand our Marxist theoretician stands for pure democracy, for the subordination of the revolutionary class, the leader of the toilers and exploited, to the majority of the population (including, therefore, the exploiters). On the other hand, as an argument against us, he explains that the revolution must inevitably bear a bourgeois character—bourgeois, because the peasantry as a whole stands on the basis of bourgeois social relations—and at the same time he pretends to uphold the proletarian, class, Marxian view.

Instead of an "economic analysis" we have a first-class hodge-podge and muddle. Instead of Marxism we have fragments of liberal doctrines and the preaching of servility to the bourgeoisie and the kulaks.

The question which Kautsky has so confused was fully explained by the Bolsheviks as far back as 1905. Yes, our revolution is a bourgeois revolution so long as we march with the peasantry as a whole. This has been as clear as clear can be to us; we have said it hundreds and thousands of times since 1905, and we have never attempted to skip this necessary stage of the historical process or abolish it by decrees. Kautsky's efforts to "expose" us on this point merely expose his own confusion of mind and his fear to recall what he wrote in 1905, when he was not yet a renegade.

But beginning with April 1917, long before the October Revolution, that is, long before we assumed power, we publicly declared and explained to the people: the revolution cannot now stop at this stage, for the country has marched forward, capitalism has advanced, ruin has reached unprecedented dimensions, which (whether one likes it or not) will demand steps forward, to socialism. For there is no other way of advancing, of saving the country that is exhausted by war, and of alleviating the sufferings of the toilers and the exploited.

Things have turned out just as we said they would. The course taken by the revolution has confirmed the correctness of our reasoning. First, with the "whole" of the peasantry against the monarchy, against the landlords, against the mediæval regime (and to that ex-

tent, the revolution remains bourgeois, bourgeois-democratic). Then, with the poorest peasants, with the semi-proletarians, with all the exploited, against capitalism, including the rural rich, the kulaks, the profiteers, and to that extent the revolution becomes a socialist one. To attempt to raise an artificial Chinese wall between the first and second revolutions, to separate them by anything else than the degree of preparedness of the proletariat and the degree of its unity with the poor peasants, means monstrously to distort Marxism, to vulgarise it, to substitute liberalism in its place. It means smuggling in a reactionary defence of the bourgeoisie as compared with the socialist proletariat by means of quasi-scientific references to the progressive character of the bourgeoisie as compared with mediævalism.

Incidentally, the Soviets represent an immeasurably higher form and type of democracy just because, by uniting and drawing the masses of workers and peasants into political life, they serve as a most sensitive barometer, the one closest to the "people" (in the sense in which Marx, in 1871, spoke of a real people's revolution <sup>36</sup>), of the growth and development of the political, class maturity of the masses. The Soviet Constitution was not drawn up according to some "plan"; it was not drawn up in a study, and was not thrust upon the toilers by bourgeois lawyers. No, this constitution grew up in the course of the development of the class struggle in proportion as class antagonisms matured. The very facts which Kautsky himself has to admit prove this.

At first, the Soviets embraced the peasantry as a whole. It was owing to the immaturity, the backwardness, the ignorance precisely of the poor peasants, that the leadership passed into the hands of the kulaks, the rich, the capitalists, the petty bourgeoisie and the petty-bourgeois intellectuals. That was the period of the domination of the petty bourgeoisie, of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries (only fools or renegades like Kautsky could regard either of these as Socialists). The petty bourgeoisie inevitably and unavoidably vacillated between the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie (Kerensky, Kornilov, Savinkov) and the dictatorship of the proletariat; for owing to the very nature of its economic position, the petty bourgeoisie is incapable of doing anything independently. By the way, Kautsky completely renounces Marxism by confining himself in his analysis of the Russian revolution to the legal and formal concept of "democracy," which serves the bourgeoisie as a screen to conceal its domination over the

masses and as a means of deceiving them, and by forgetting that in practice "democracy" sometimes stands for the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, sometimes for the impotent reformism of the petty bourgeoisie which submits to that dictatorship, and so on. According to Kautsky, in a capitalist country there were bourgeois parties and there was a proletarian party (the Bolsheviks), which led the majority, the mass of the proletariat, but there were no petty-bourgeois parties! The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries had no class roots, no petty-bourgeois roots!

The vacillations of the petty bourgeoisie, of the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, helped to enlighten the masses and to repel the overwhelming majority of them, all the "rank and file," all the proletarians and semi-proletarians, from such "leaders."

The Bolsheviks secured predominance in the Soviets (in Petrograd and Moscow by October 1917); the split among the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks became more pronounced.

The victorious Bolshevik revolution meant the end of vacillation, it meant the complete destruction of the monarchy and of landlord-ism (which had not been destroyed before the October Revolution). We carried the bourgeois revolution to its conclusion. The peasantry supported us as a whole. Its antagonism to the socialist proletariat could not reveal itself all at once. The Soviets embraced the peasantry in general. The class divisions among the peasantry had not yet matured, had not yet come into the open.

That process took place in the summer and autumn of 1918. The Czechoslovak counter-revolutionary mutiny roused the kulaks. A wave of kulak revolts swept over Russia. The poor peasantry learned, not from books or newspapers, but from experience, that its interests were irreconcilably antagonistic to those of the kulaks, the rich, the rural bourgeoisie. Like every other petty-bourgeois party, the "Left Socialist-Revolutionaries" reflected the vacillation of the masses, and precisely in the summer of 1918 they split: one section joined forces with the Czechoslovaks (the insurrection in Moscow, when Proshyan, having seized the telegraph office—for one hour!—announced to Russia that the Bolsheviks had been overthrown; then the treachery of Muravyev, Commander-in-Chief of the army that was fighting the Czechoslovaks, etc.<sup>37</sup>), while another section, that mentioned above, remained with the Bolsheviks.

The growing acuteness of the food shortage in the towns lent increas-

ing urgency to the question of the grain monopoly (this Kautsky the theoretician completely "forgot" about in his economic analysis, which is a mere repetition of platitudes gleaned from Maslov's writings of ten years ago!).

The old landlord and bourgeois, and even the democratic-republican state had sent to the rural districts armed detachments which were practically at the beck and call of the bourgeoisie. Mr. Kautsky does not know this! He does not regard that as the "dictatorship of the bourgeoisie"—God forbid! That is "pure democracy," especially if endorsed by a bourgeois parliament! Nor has Kautsky "heard" that, in the summer and autumn of 1917, Avksentyev and S. Maslov, in company with Kerensky, Tseretelli and other Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, arrested members of the Land Committees; he does not say a word about that!

The whole point is that a bourgeois state which is exercising the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie through a democratic republic cannot confess to the people that it is serving the bourgeoisie; it cannot tell the truth, and is compelled to play the hypocrite.

But a state of the Paris Commune type, a Soviet state, openly and frankly tells the people the truth and declares that it is the dictatorship of the proletariat and the poor peasantry; and by this truth it wins over scores and scores of millions of new citizens who are kept down under any democratic republic, but who are drawn by the Soviets into political life, into democracy, into the administration of the state. The Soviet Republic sends into the rural districts detachments of armed workers, primarily the most advanced, from the capitals. These workers carry socialism into the countryside, win over the poor, organise and enlighten them, and help them to suppress the resistance of the bourgeoisie.

All who are familiar with affairs and have been in the rural districts declare that it is only now, in the summer and autumn of 1918, that the rural districts are passing through the "October" (i.e., proletarian) "revolution." A turning point has been reached. The wave of kulak revolts is giving way to a rising movement among the poor, to the growth of the "Committees of Poor Peasants." In the army, the number of working class commissars, working class officers and working class commanders of divisions and armies is increasing. And at the very time that Kautsky, frightened by the July (1918) crisis and the lamentations of the bourgeoisie, was running after the latter like a

"cockerel," and was writing a pamphlet breathing the conviction that the Bolsheviks were on the eve of being overthrown by the peasantry; at the very time that Kautsky regarded the secession of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries as a "contraction" (p. 37) of the circle of those who supported the Bolsheviks—at that very time the real circle of supporters of Bolshevism was expanding enormously, because millions and millions of the village poor were freeing themselves from the tutelage and influence of the kulaks and village bourgeoisie and were awakening to independent political life.

We have lost hundreds of Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, spineless peasant intellectuals and kulaks; but we have gained millions of representatives of the poor.\*

A year after the proletarian revolution in the capitals; and under its influence and with its assistance, the proletarian revolution began in the remote rural districts, and this has finally consolidated the power of the Soviets and Bolshevism, and has finally proved that there is no force within the country that can withstand it.

Having completed the bourgeois-democratic revolution in conjunction with the peasantry in general, the Russian proletariat passed on definitely to the socialist revolution when it succeeded in splitting the rural population, in winning over the rural proletarians and semi-proletarians, and in uniting them against the kulaks and the bourgeoisie, including the peasant bourgeoisie.

If the Bolshevik proletariat in the capitals and large industrial centres had not been able to rally the village poor around itself against the rich peasants, this would indeed have proved that Russia was "unripe" for the socialist revolution. The peasantry would then have remained an "integral whole," i.e., it would have remained under the economic, political, and moral leadership of the kulaks, of the rich, of the bourgeoisie, and the revolution would not have passed beyond the limits of a bourgeois-democratic revolution. (But, let it be said in parenthesis, even this would not have proved that the proletariat should not have assumed power, for it is the proletariat alone that has really carried the bourgeois-democratic revolution to its conclusion, it is the proletariat alone that has done something really important to bring nearer the world proletarian revolution, and the proletariat alone

<sup>\*</sup> At the Sixth Congress of Soviets (November 7-9, 1918), there were 967 voting delegates, 950 of whom were Bolsheviks, and 351 non-voting delegates, of whom 335 were Bolsheviks, i.e., 97 per cent of the total number of delegates were Bolsheviks.

that has created the Soviet state, which, after the Paris Commune, is the second step towards the socialist state.)

On the other hand, if, in October-November 1917, the Bolshevik proletariat, without waiting for the class differentiation in the rural districts, without being able to prepare for it and bring it about, had tried at once to "decree" a civil war or the "introduction of socialism" in the rural districts, had tried to do without a temporary bloc (alliance) with the peasants in general, without making a number of concessions to the middle peasants, etc., that would have been a Blanquist distortion of Marxism, an attempt of the minority to impose its will upon the majority; it would have been a theoretical absurdity, revealing a failure to understand that a general peasant revolution is still a bourgeois revolution, and that without a series of transitions, of transitional stages, it cannot be transformed into a socialist revolution in a backward country.

Kautsky has confused everything in this very important theoretical and political problem, and has, in practice, proved to be nothing but a servant of the bourgeoisie, howling against the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Kautsky has introduced a similar, if not greater, confusion into another very interesting and important question, namely: was the legislative activity of the Soviet Republic in the sphere of agrarian reformation—that most difficult and yet most important of socialist reformations—based on sound principles and properly carried out? We should be grateful beyond words to any West-European Marxist who, after studying at least the most important documents, gave a criticism of our policy, because he would thereby help us immensely, and would also help the revolution that is maturing throughout the world. But instead of criticism Kautsky produces an incredible theoretical confusion, which converts Marxism into liberalism and which, in practice, is a series of idle, malicious, vulgar sallies against the Bolsheviks. Let the reader judge for himself.

"Large landlordism was made untenable by the revolution. That was at once clear. The transference of the large estates to the present population became inevitable." (That is not true, Mr. Kautsky. You substitute what is "clear" to you for the attitude of the different classes towards the question. The history of the revolution has shown that the coalition government of the bourgeois and the petty bour-

geois, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, pursued a policy of preserving large landlordism. This was proved particularly by S. Maslov's bill <sup>88</sup> and by the arrest of the members of the Land Committees. Without the dictatorship of the proletariat, the "peasant population" would not have vanquished the landlords, who had joined forces with the capitalists.)

"But as to the forms in which it was to be carried out, there was no unity. Several solutions were conceivable." (Kautsky is most of all concerned about the "unity" of the "Socialists," no matter who called themselves by that name. He forgets that the principal classes in capitalist society are bound to arrive at different solutions.)

"...From the socialist point of view, the most rational solution would have been to transform the large estates into state property and to allow the peasants who hitherto had been employed on them as wage labourers to cultivate them in the form of cooperative societies. But such a solution presupposes the existence of a type of agricultural labourer that does not exist in Russia. Another solution would have been to transform the large estates into state property and to divide them up into small plots to be rented out to peasants who owned little land. Had that been done, something socialistic would also have been achieved...."

As usual, Kautsky confines himself to the celebrated: on the one hand it cannot but be admitted, and on the other hand it must be confessed. He places different solutions side by side without a thought—the only realistic and Marxian thought—as to what must be the transitional stages from capitalism to communism in such and such specific conditions. There are agricultural labourers in Russia, but not many; and Kautsky did not touch on the question which the Soviet government did raise of the method of transition to a communal and cooperative form of land cultivation. The most curious thing, however, is that Kautsky claims to see "something socialistic" in the renting out of small plots of land. In reality, this is a petty-bourgeois slogan, and there is nothing "socialistic" in it. If the "state" that rents out the land is not a state of the Paris Commune type, but a parliamentary bourgeois republic (and such is Kautsky's constant assumption) the renting of land in small plots is typical liberal reform.

That the Soviet government has abolished all private property in land, of that Kautsky says nothing. Worse than that: he resorts to an incredible subterfuge and quotes the decrees of the Soviet government in such a way as to omit the most essential.

After stating that "small production strives for complete private ownership of the means of production," and the Constituent Assembly would have been the "only authority" capable of preventing dividing up of the land (an assertion which will evoke laughter in Russia, where everybody knows that the Soviets alone are recognised as authoritative by the workers and peasants, while the Constituent Assembly has become the slogan of the Czechoslovaks and the landlords), Kautsky continues:

"One of the first decrees of the Soviet government declared that (1) the rights of the landlords to ownership of the land are abolished forthwith without compensation. (2) The landed estates, as well as all crown, monasterial and church lands, with all their livestock, implements, farm buildings and everything pertaining thereto, shall be placed at the disposal of the rural area Land Committees and the district Soviets of Peasants' Deputies pending the settlement of the land question by the Constituent Assembly."

Having quoted only these two clauses, Kautsky concludes:

"The reference to the Constituent Assembly has remained a dead letter. In point of fact, the peasants in the separate volosts [townships] could do as they pleased with the land" (p. 47).

Here you have an example of Kautsky's "criticism"! Here you have a "scientific" work which is more like a fraud. The German reader is induced to believe that the Bolsheviks capitulated before the peasantry on the question of private property in land! That the Bolsheviks permitted the peasants to act locally ("in the separate volosts") in whatever way they pleased!

But as a matter of fact, the decree that Kautsky quotes—the first to be promulgated, on October 26, 1917 (November 8) \*—consists not of two, but of five clauses, plus eight clauses of the "Mandate," which, it was expressly stated, "shall serve as a guide."

Clause 3 of the decree states that the property is transferred "to the people," and that "inventories of all property confiscated" shall be drawn up and the property "protected in a strict revolutionary way." And the Mandate declares that "private ownership of land shall be abolished forever," that "lands with highly developed forms of cultivation ... shall not be divided up," that "all livestock and farm imple-

<sup>\*</sup> See V. I. Lenin, "Decree on the Land," Collected Works, Vol. XXII, Russian ed., and Selected Works, Vol. VI (International Publishers, N. Y.).—Ed.

ments of the confiscated estates shall be reserved for the exclusive use of the state or the communities, depending on their size and importance, and no compensation shall be paid therefor," and that "all land shall become part of the national land fund."

Further, simultaneously with the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly (January 5, 1918), the Third Congress of Soviets adopted the "Declaration of Rights of the Toiling and Exploited People," \* which now forms part of the Fundamental Law of the Soviet Republic. Article 2, paragraph 1, of this Declaration states that "private ownership of land is hereby abolished," and that "model estates and agricultural enterprises are proclaimed national property."

Hence, the reference to the Constituent Assembly did *not* remain a dead letter, because another national representative body, immeasurably more authoritative in the eyes of the peasants, took upon itself the solution of the agrarian problem.

Again, on February 6 (19), 1918, the Land Socialisation Act was promulgated, which once again confirmed the abolition of all private ownership of land and placed the land and all private stock and implements at the disposal of the Soviet authorities under the control of the federal Soviet government. Among the duties connected with the disposal of the land, the law prescribed:

"The development of collective farming as more advantageous in respect to economy of labour and produce, at the expense of individual farming, with a view to the transition to socialist farming" (Article 11, paragraph d).

The same law, in establishing the principle of equal land tenure, replied to the fundamental question: "Who has a right to the use of the land?" in the following manner:

"Article 20. Plots of land surface for public and private needs within the borders of the Russian Soviet Federative Republic may be used: A. For cultural and educational purposes: (1) by the state as represented by the organs of Soviet government (federal, regional, gubernia [province], uyezd [county], volost and village), and (2) by public bodies (under the control, and with the consent, of the local Soviet authorities); B. For agricultural purposes; (3) by agricultural communes, (4) by agricultural cooperative associations, (5) by village communities, (6) by individual families and persons...."

The reader will perceive that Kautsky has completely distorted the facts, and has given the German reader an absolutely false view of the agrarian policy and agrarian legislation of the proletarian state in Russia.

Kautsky did not even formulate the theoretically important fundamental questions. These questions are:

(1) Equal land tenure; (2) Nationalisation of the land—the relation of these two measures to socialism in general, and to the transition from capitalism to communism in particular; (3) Social cultivation of the soil as a transition stage from small, parcellised farming to large-scale social farming; does the manner in which this question is dealt with in Soviet legislation meet the requirements of socialism?

On the first question it is necessary, first of all, to establish the following two fundamental facts: (a) in weighing up the experience of 1905 (I may refer, for instance to my work on the agrarian problem in the first Russian revolution \*), the Bolsheviks pointed to the democratically progressive, the democratically revolutionary value of the slogan "equal land tenure"; and in 1917, before the October Revolution,† they spoke of this quite definitely; (b) when adopting the Land Socialisation Act—the "spirit" of which is equal land tenure—the Bolsheviks most explicitly and definitely declared: this is not our idea; we do not agree with this slogan; but we think it our duty to pass it because it is demanded by the overwhelming majority of the peasants. And ideas and demands of the majority of the toilers are things that the toilers must discard of their own accord; such demands cannot be "abolished" or "skipped over." We Bolsheviks will help the peasantry to discard petty-bourgeois demands, to pass from them as quickly and as painlessly as possible to socialist demands.

A Marxist theoretician who wanted to help the working class revolution by his scientific analysis should have answered the question: first, is it true that the idea of equal land tenure is of democratic-revolutionary value in that it carries the *bourgeois*-democratic revolution to its conclusion? Secondly, did the Bolsheviks act correctly in helping to carry through their votes (and by most loyally observing) the petty-bourgeois equal tenure law?

<sup>\*</sup> See V. I. Lenin, "The Agrarian Programme of Social-Democracy in the First Russian Revolution," *Collected Works*, Vol. XI, and *Selected Works*, Vol. III (International Publishers, N. Y.).—Ed.

<sup>†</sup> See V. I. Lenin, "Peasants and Workers," Selected Works, Vol. VI.-Ed.

Kautsky failed even to perceive what, theoretically, was the crux of the question!

Kautsky will never be able to refute the view that equal land tenure has a progressive and revolutionary value in the bourgeois-democratic revolution. That revolution cannot go beyond this. By reaching its limit, it all the more clearly, rapidly and easily reveals to the masses the *inadequacy* of bourgeois-democratic solutions and the necessity of proceeding beyond their limits, of passing on to *socialism*.

Having overthrown tsarism and the landlords, the peasantry dreams of equal land tenure, and no power on earth could have hindered the peasantry, once they had been freed both from the landlords and from the bourgeois parliamentary republican state. The proletarians said to the peasants: We will help you to reach "ideal" capitalism, for equal land tenure is the idealisation of capitalism from the point of view of the small producer. At the same time we will prove to you its inadequacy and the necessity of passing to the social cultivation of the land.

It would be interesting to see Kautsky attempt to prove that this leadership of the peasant struggle by the proletariat was wrong.

But Kautsky preferred to evade the question altogether....

Next, Kautsky deliberately deceived his German readers by withholding from them the fact that in its land law the Soviet government gave direct preference to communes and cooperative associations by putting them in the forefront.

With the peasantry to the end of the bourgeois-democratic revolution; and with the poorest, the proletarian and semi-proletarian section of the peasantry, forward to the socialist revolution! That has been the policy of the Bolsheviks, and it is the only Marxian policy.

But Kautsky is all muddled up and cannot formulate a single question! On the one hand, he dare not say that the proletarians should have parted company with the peasantry over the question of equal land tenure, for he realises that it would have been absurd (and, moreover, in 1905, when he was not yet a renegade, he himself had clearly and explicitly advocated an alliance between the workers and peasants as a condition for the victory of the revolution). On the other hand, he sympathetically quotes the liberal platitudes of the Menshevik Maslov, who "proves" that petty-bourgeois equal land tenure is utopian and reactionary from the point of view of socialism, but fails to point out the progressive and revolutionary character of the petty-

bourgeois struggle for equality and equal tenure from the point of view of the bourgeois-democratic revolution.

Kautsky is in a hopeless muddle: note that he (in 1918) insists on the bourgeois character of the Russian Revolution. He (in 1918) peremptorily says: don't go beyond these limits! Yet this very same Kautsky sees "something socialistic" (for a bourgeois revolution) in the petty-bourgeois reform of renting out small plots of land to the poor peasants (which is an approximation to equal land tenure)!!

Let those understand this who can!

In addition to all this, Kautsky displays a philistine inability to take into account the real policy of a definite party. He quotes the phrases of the Menshevik Maslov and refuses to see the real policy the Menshevik Party pursued in 1917, when, in "coalition" with the landlords and Cadets, they advocated what was virtually a liberal agrarian reform and compromise with the landlords (proof: the arrest of the members of the Land Committees and S. Maslov's Land Bill).

Kautsky failed to realise that P. Maslov's phrases about the reactionary and utopian character of petty-bourgeois equality are really a screen to conceal the Menshevik policy of compromise between the peasants and the landlords (i.e., of helping the landlords to dupe the peasants), instead of the revolutionary overthrow of the landlords by the peasants.

What a "Marxist" Kautsky is!

It was the Bolsheviks who strictly differentiated between the bourgeois-democratic revolution and the socialist revolution: by carrying the former to its culmination, they opened the way for the transition to the latter. This was the only policy that was revolutionary and Marxian.

It is useless for Kautsky to repeat the feeble liberal witticism: "Never yet have the small peasants anywhere adopted collective farming under the influence of theoretical convictions" (p. 50).

How smart!

But never before have the small peasants of any large country been under the influence of a proletarian state!

Never before have the small peasants anywhere engaged in an open class struggle reaching the extent of a civil war between the poor peasants and the rich peasants, with propagandist, political, economic and military support given to the poor by a proletarian state.

Never before have the profiteers and the rich amassed such wealth

out of war, while the masses of the peasantry have been so utterly ruined.

Kautsky just reiterates old stuff, he just chews the old cud, he is afraid even to ponder over the new tasks of the proletarian dictatorship.

But what, dear Kautsky, if the peasants *lack* implements for small-scale farming and the proletarian state *helps* them to obtain machines for the collective cultivation of the soil—is that a "theoretical conviction"?

We shall now pass to the question of the nationalisation of the land. Our Narodniks, including all the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, deny that the measure we have adopted is the nationalisation of the land. They are wrong in theory. In so far as we remain within the framework of commodity production and capitalism, the abolition of private property in land is the nationalisation of the land. The term "socialisation" merely expresses a tendency, a desire, the preparation for the transition to socialism.

What should be the attitude of Marxists towards the nationalisation of the land?

Here, too, Kautsky fails even to formulate the theoretical question, or, what is still worse, he deliberately evades it; although one knows from Russian literature that Kautsky is aware of the old controversies among the Russian Marxists on the question of nationalisation, municipalisation (i.e., the transfer of the large estates to the local authorities), or division of the land.

Kautsky's assertion that to transfer the large estates to the state and rent them out in small plots to peasants with little land would be achieving "something socialistic" is a downright mockery of Marxism. We have already shown that there is nothing socialistic about it. But that is not all; it would not even be carrying the bourgeois-democratic revolution to its conclusion.

Kautsky's great misfortune is that he placed his trust in the Mensheviks. Hence the curious position that while insisting on the bourgeois character of our revolution and reproaching the Bolsheviks for taking it into their heads to proceed to socialism, he himself proposes a liberal reform under the guise of socialism, without carrying this reform to the point of completely clearing away all the survivals of mediævalism in agrarian relationships! The arguments of Kautsky, as of his Menshevik advisers, amount to a defence of the liberal bourgeoisie, who

fear revolution, instead of a defence of consistent bourgeois-democratic revolution.

Indeed, why should only the large estates, and not all the land, be transformed into state property? The liberal bourgeoisie thereby strives for the maximum preservation of the old conditions (i.e., the least consistency in revolution) and the maximum facility for a reversion to the old conditions. The radical bourgeoisie, i.e., the bourgeoisie that wants to carry the bourgeois revolution to its conclusion, demands the nationalisation of the land.

Kautsky, who in the dim and distant past, some twenty years ago, wrote an excellent Marxian work on the agrarian question, cannot but know that Marx declared that land nationalisation is in fact a consistent slogan of the *bourgeoisie*. <sup>30</sup> Kautsky cannot but be aware of Marx's controversy with Rodbertus, and Marx's remarkable passages in his *Theories of Surplus Value* where the revolutionary significance—in the bourgeois-democratic sense—of land nationalisation is explained with particular clarity.

The Menshevik P. Maslov, whom Kautsky, unfortunately for himself, chose as an adviser, denied that the Russian peasants would agree to the nationalisation of all the land (including the peasants' lands). To a certain extent, this view of Maslov's could be connected with his "original" theory (which merely parrots the bourgeois critics of Marx), viz., his repudiation of absolute rent and his recognition of the "law" (or "fact," as Maslov expressed it) of the "diminishing fertility of the soil."

In point of fact, however, even the Revolution of 1905 revealed that the overwhelming majority of the peasants in Russia, members of village communities as well as individual peasant proprietors, were in favour of the nationalisation of all the land. The Revolution of 1917 confirmed this, and after the assumption of power by the proletariat this was done. The Bolsheviks remained loyal to Marxism and never tried (in spite of Kautsky, who, without a shadow of evidence, accuses us of doing so) to "skip" the bourgeois-democratic revolution. The Bolsheviks, first of all, helped the most radical, most revolutionary of the bourgeois-democratic ideologists of the peasantry, those who stood closest to the proletariat, namely, the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, to carry out what was in effect the nationalisation of the land. On October 26, 1917, i.e., on the very first day of the proletarian, socialist revolution, private ownership of land was abolished in Russia.

This laid the foundation, the most perfect from the point of view of the development of capitalism (Kautsky cannot deny this without breaking with Marx), and at the same time created an agrarian system which is the most flexible from the point of view of the transition to socialism. From the bourgeois-democratic point of view, the revolutionary peasantry in Russia could go no further: there can be nothing more "ideal" from this point of view, nothing more "radical" (from this same point of view) than the nationalisation of the land and equal land tenure. It was the Bolsheviks, and only the Bolsheviks, who, thanks to the victory of the *proletarian* revolution, helped the peasantry to carry the bourgeois-democratic revolution really to its conclusion. And only in this way did they do the utmost to facilitate and accelerate the transition to the socialist revolution.

One can judge from this what an incredible muddle Kautsky offers to his readers when he accuses the Bolsheviks of failing to understand the bourgeois character of the revolution, and yet himself betrays such a wide departure from Marxism that he says nothing about the nationalisation of the land and proposes the least revolutionary (from the bourgeois point of view) liberal agrarian reform as "something socialistic"!

We have now come to the third question formulated above, namely, to what extent the proletarian dictatorship in Russia has taken into account the necessity of passing to the social cultivation of the soil. Here again, Kautsky commits something in the nature of a forgery: he quotes only the "theses" of one Bolshevik which speak of the task of passing to the collective cultivation of the soil! After quoting one of these theses, our "theoretician" triumphantly exclaims:

"Unfortunately, a task is not fulfilled by the fact that it is called a task. For the time being, collective farming in Russia is doomed to remain on paper only. Never yet have the small peasants anywhere adopted collective farming under the influence of theoretical convictions" (p. 50).

Never yet has a literary swindle been perpetrated anywhere equal to that to which Kautsky has stooped. He quotes "theses," but says nothing about the *law* of the Soviet government. He talks about "theoretical convictions," but says nothing about the proletarian state which holds in its hands the factories and goods! All that Kautsky the Marxist wrote in 1899 in his *Agrarian Question* about the means at the disposal of the proletarian state for bringing about the gradual

transition of the small peasants to socialism has been forgotten by Kautsky the renegade in 1918.

Of course, a few hundred state-supported argricultural communes and Soviet farms (i.e., large farms cultivated by associations of workers on behalf of the state) are very little; but can Kautsky's ignoring of this fact be called "criticism"?

The nationalisation of the land that was carried out in Russia by the proletarian dictatorship has best ensured the carrying of the bourgeois-democratic revolution to its conclusion—even in the event of a victory of the counter-revolution causing a reversion from land nationalisation to land division (I made a special examination of this possibility in my pamphlet on the agrarian programme of the Marxists in the 1905 Revolution \*). In addition, the nationalisation of the land has given the proletarian state the maximum opportunity of passing to socialism in agriculture.

To sum up, Kautsky has presented us, as far as theory is concerned, with an incredible theoretical hodge-podge which is a complete renunciation of Marxism, and, as far as practice is concerned, with a policy of servility to the bourgeoisie and its reformism. A fine criticism indeed!

Kautsky begins his "economic analysis" of industry with the following magnificent argument:

Russia has a large-scale capitalist industry. Cannot a socialist system of production be built up on this foundation?

"One might have thought so if socialism meant that the workers of the separate factories and mines appropriated these for themselves in order to carry on production separately at each factory. This very day, August 5, as I am writing these lines," Kautsky adds, "a speech is reported from Moscow delivered by Lenin on August 2, † in which he is stated to have declared: 'The workers are holding the factories firmly in their hands, and the peasants will not return the land to the landlords.' Hitherto, the slogan: the factories to the workers, and the land to the peasants—has been an anarcho-syndicalist slogan, not a Social-Democratic one" (pp. 52-53).

I have quoted this passage in full in order that the Russian workers, who formerly respected Kautsky, and quite rightly, may see for

<sup>•</sup> See V. I. Lenin, "Agrarian Programme of the Social-Democrats in the First Russian Revolution," Collected Works, Vol. XI, Russian ed.—Ed.

<sup>†</sup> See pages 184-85 in this volume.—Ed.

themselves the methods employed by this deserter to the bourgeois camp.

Just think: on August 5, when numerous decrees on the nationalisation of factories in Russia had been issued—and not a single factory had been "appropriated by the workers," but had all been converted into the property of the Republic—on August 5, Kautsky, on the strength of an obviously dishonest interpretation of one sentence in my speech, tries to make the German readers believe that in Russia the factories are being handed over to individual groups of workers! And after that Kautsky, at great length, chews the cud about its being wrong to hand over single factories to the workers!

This is not criticism, it is the trick of a lackey of the bourgeoisie, whom the capitalists have hired to libel the workers' revolution.

The factories must be handed over to the state, or to the municipalities, or the consumers' cooperative societies, says Kautsky over and over again, and finally adds:

"This is what they are now trying to do in Russia...." Now!! What does that mean? In August? Why, could not Kautsky have commissioned his friends Stein, or Axelrod, or any of the other friends of the Russian bourgeoisie to translate at least one of the decrees on the factories?

"What will come of this we cannot yet tell. At all events, this aspect of the activity of the Soviet Republic is of the greatest interest for us, but it still remains entirely shrouded in darkness. There is no lack of decrees... [that is why Kautsky ignores their contents, or conceals them from his readers!] but there is no reliable information as to the effect of these decrees. Socialist production is impossible without all-round, detailed, reliable and rapidly informing statistics. The Soviet Republic cannot possibly have created such statistics yet. What we learn about its economic activities is highly contradictory and cannot be verified. This, too, is a result of the dictatorship and the suppression of democracy. There is no freedom of the press, or of speech" (p. 53).

This is how history is written! From a "free" press of the capitalists and Dutovites, Kautsky, of course, would have received information about factories being handed over to the workers... This "serious savant" who stands above class is really magnificent! About the countless facts which show that the factories are being handed over to the republic *only*, that they are managed by an organ of the Soviet government, the Supreme Council of National Economy, which is

constituted mainly of workers elected by the trade unions, Kautsky refuses to say a single word. With the obstinacy of a "man in a muffler," he stubbornly keeps repeating one thing: give me peaceful democracy, without civil war, without a dictatorship and with good statistics (The Soviet Republic has created a statistical service in which the best statistical authorities in Russia are employed, but, of course, an ideal system of statistics cannot be created so quickly). In a word, what Kautsky demands is a revolution without revolution, without fierce struggle, without violence. It is equivalent to asking for strikes in which workers and employers do not display furious passion. Try to distinguish the difference between this kind of "Socialist" and a common or garden variety of liberal bureaucrat!

And so, relying upon such "factual material," i.e., deliberately and contemptuously ignoring the innumerable facts, Kautsky concludes:

"It is doubtful whether the Russian proletariat has obtained more in the sense of real practical acquisitions, and not of mere decrees, under the Soviet Republic than it would have obtained under a Constituent Assembly, in which, as in the Soviets, Socialists, although of a different hue, predominated" (p. 58).

A gem, is it not? We would advise Kautsky's admirers to circulate this utterance as widely as possible among the Russian workers, for Kautsky could not have provided better material for gauging the depth of his political degradation. Comrades and workers, Kerensky was also a "Socialist," only of a "different hue"! Kautsky the historian is satisfied with the name, the title which the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks "appropriated" to themselves. Kautsky the historian refuses even to listen to the facts which show that under Kerensky the Mensheviks and the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries supported the imperialist policy and marauding practices of the bourgeoisie; he is discreetly silent about the fact that the majority in the Constituent Assembly consisted of these very champions of imperialist war and bourgeois dictatorship. And this is called "economic analysis"!

In conclusion let me quote another sample of this "economic analysis":

"... After an existence of nine months, the Soviet Republic, instead of spreading general well-being, feels itself under the necessity of explaining why there is general distress" (p. 41).

We are accustomed to hear such arguments from the lips of the Cadets. All the flunkeys of the bourgeoisie in Russia argue in this way: Show us, after nine months, your general prosperity!—and this after four years of devastating war, with foreign capital giving allround support to the sabotage and insurrections of the bourgeoisie. Actually, there is absolutely no difference whatever, not a shadow of difference, between Kautsky and the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie. His suave talk, cloaked in the guise of "socialism," only repeats what the Kornilovites, the Dutovites and Krasnovites in Russia say bluntly, straightforwardly and without embellishment.

The above lines were written on November 9, 1918. That same night, news was received from Germany announcing the beginning of a victorious revolution, first in Kiel and other Northern towns and ports, where the power has passed into the hands of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, then in Berlin, where, too, power has passed into the hands of a Soviet. 40

The conclusion which still remained to be written to my pamphlet on Kautsky and on the proletarian revolution is now superfluous.

November 10, 1918.

## APPENDIX

## VANDERVELDE'S NEW BOOK ON THE STATE

It was only after I had read Kautsky's book that I had the opportunity to acquaint myself with Vandervelde's Socialism Versus the State (Paris, 1918). A comparison of the two books involuntarily suggests itself. Kautsky is the ideological leader of the Second International (1889-1914), while Vandervelde, in his capacity of President of the International Socialist Bureau, is its official representative. Both represent the complete bankruptcy of the Second International, and both, with the dexterity of experienced journalists, "skilfully" conceal this bankruptcy and their own bankruptcy and desertion to the bourgeoisie with Marxian catchwords. One gives us a striking example of what is typical of German opportunism, with its ponderous, theoretical and gross falsification of Marxism by trimming it of all that is inacceptable to the bourgeoisie. The other is typical of the Latin—to a certain extent, one may say, of the West European (that is, west of Germany)—species of prevailing opportunism, which is more

flexible, less ponderous, and which falsifies Marxism by the same fundamental method, but in a more subtle manner.

Both radically distort both Marx's doctrine of the state and his doctrine of the dictatorship of the proletariat; Vandervelde deals more with the former subject, Kautsky with the latter. Both obscure the very close and inseparable connection that exists between the two subjects. Both are revolutionaries and Marxists in word, but renegades in practice, who strain every effort to dissociate themselves from revolution. Neither of them betrays even a trace of what permeates all the works of Marx and Engels, and of what in fact distinguishes socialism from a bourgeois caricature of it, namely, the elucidation of the tasks of revolution as distinct from the tasks of reform, the elucidation of revolutionary tactics as distinct from reformist tactics, the elucidation of the role of the proletariat in the abolition of the system, order or regime of wage slavery as distinct from the role of the proletariat of the "Great Powers" which shares with the bourgeoisie a particle of the latter's imperialist super-profits and super-booty.

We will quote a few of Vandervelde's most important arguments in support of this opinion.

Like Kautsky, Vandervelde quotes Marx and Engels with great zeal, and, like Kautsky, he quotes from Marx and Engels everything except what is quite inacceptable to the bourgeoisie and what distinguishes a revolutionary from a reformist. He says all you like about the conquest of political power by the proletariat, since practice has long ago confined this within strictly parliamentary limits. But not a single word has he to say about the fact that after the experience of the Paris Commune, Marx and Engels found it necessary to supplement the, in part, obsolete Communist Manifesto with an elucidation of the truth that the working class cannot simply take possession of the ready-made state machine, but must smash it. Vandervelde, like Kautsky, as if by agreement, ignores what is most essential in the experience of the proletarian revolution, precisely that which distinguishes proletarian revolution from bourgeois reform.

Like Kautsky, Vandervelde talks about the dictatorship of the proletariat only in order to dissociate himself from it. Kautsky did it by gross falsifications. Vandervelde does it in a more subtle way. In the section of his book on the subject, Section 4, "The Conquest of Political Power by the Proletariat," he devotes sub-section b to the question of the "collective dictatorship of the proletariat," "quotes"

Marx and Engels (I repeat, omitting all that pertains to the main point, namely the *smashing* of the old, bourgeois-democratic state machine), and concludes:

"In Socialist circles, the social revolution is commonly conceived in the following manner: a new Commune, this time victorious, and not in one centre, but in all the main centres of the capitalist world.

"A hypothesis, but a hypothesis which has nothing improbable about it at a time when it is becoming evident that the post-war period will in many countries see unprecedented class antagonisms and social convulsions.

"But if the failure of the Paris Commune, not to speak of the difficulties of the Russian revolution, proves anything at all, it is that it is impossible to put an end to the capitalist system of society until the proletariat has been sufficiently trained to make proper use of the power which the force of circumstances may put into its hands" (p. 73).

And absolutely nothing more on the essence of the question!

Such are the leaders and representatives of the Second International! In 1912 they signed the Basle Manifesto, which explicitly speaks of the connection of that very war which broke out in 1914 with a proletarian revolution, and actually used it as a threat. And when the war broke out and a revolutionary situation arose, the Kautskys and Vanderveldes began to dissociate themselves from revolution. A revolution of the Paris Commune type, don't you see, is only a not improbable hypothesis! This is quote analogous to Kautsky's argument about the possible role of the Soviets in Europe.

But that is just the way every educated liberal argues; he will, no doubt, agree now that a new Commune is "not improbable," that the Soviets have a great role to play, etc. The proletarian revolutionary differs from the liberal in that he, as a theoretician, analyses the new state significance of the Commune and the Soviets. Vandervelde, however, says nothing about what Marx and Engels said at such length on the subject when analysing the experience of the Paris Commune.

As a practical politician, a Marxist should have made it clear that only traitors to socialism can now evade the task of explaining the need for a proletarian revolution (of the Commune type, the Soviet type, or perhaps of some other type), of explaining the necessity of preparing for it, of preaching revolution among the masses, of refuting the petty-bourgeois prejudices against it, etc.

But neither Kautsky nor Vandervelde does anything of the sort,

because they themselves are traitors to socialism, who only want to maintain their reputation as Socialists and Marxists among the workers.

Take the theoretical formulation of the question.

The state, even in a democratic republic, is nothing more nor less than a machine for the suppression of one class by another. Kautsky is familiar with this truth, admits it, agrees with it, but—he evades the fundamental question: what class must the proletariat suppress when it establishes the proletarian state, for what reasons, and by what means.

Vandervelde is familiar with, admits, agrees with and quotes this fundamental proposition of Marxism (p. 72 of his book), but—he does not say a single word on the "unpleasant" (for the capitalists) subject of the suppression of the resistance of the exploiters!

Both Vandervelde and Kautsky have completely evaded this "unpleasant" subject. Therein lies their renegacy.

Like Kautsky, Vandervelde is a past master in the art of substituting eclecticism for dialectics. On the one hand it cannot but be admitted, and on the other hand it must be confessed. On the one hand, the term state may mean "the nation as a whole" (see Littre's dictionary—a learned work, it cannot be denied—and Vandervelde, p. 87); on the other hand, the term state may mean the "government." (*Ibid.*) Vandervelde quotes this learned platitude, with approval, side by side with quotations from Marx.

"The Marxian meaning of the word 'state' differs from the ordinary meaning," writes Vandervelde. Hence "misunderstandings" may arise. "Marx and Engels regard the state not as the state in the broad sense, not as an organ of guidance, as the representative of the general interests of society (intérêts généraux de la société). It is the state as the power, the state as the organ of authority, the state as the instrument of the rule of one class over another" (pp. 75-76).

Marx and Engels speak about the abolition of the state only in its second meaning.... "Too absolute propositions run the risk of being inexact. There are many transitional stages between the capitalist state, which is based on the exclusive rule of one class, and the proletarian state, the aim of which is to abolish all classes" (p. 156).

There you have an example of a Vandervelde's "manner," which is only slightly different from that of Kautsky's, and, in essence, identical with it. Dialectics repudiates absolute truths and explains the successive changes of opposites and the significance of crises in history. The eclectic does not want propositions that are "too absolute," because he wants to push forward his philistine desire to substitute "transitional stages" for revolution.

Kautsky and Vandervelde say nothing about the fact that the transitional stage between the state as an organ of the rule of the capitalist class and the state as an organ of the rule of the proletariat is precisely revolution, which means overthrowing the bourgeoisie and breaking up, smashing, its state machine.

Kautsky and Vandervelde obscure the fact that the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie must give way to the dictatorship of one class, the proletariat, and that the "transitional stages" of the revolution will be followed by the "transitional stages" of the gradual withering away of the proletarian state.

Therein lies their political renegacy.

Therein, theoretically, philosophically, lies their substitution of eclecticism and sophistry for dialectics. Dialectics is concrete and revolutionary and distinguishes between the "transition" from the dictatorship of one class to the dictatorship of another, and the "transition" from the democratic proletarian state to the non-state ("the withering away of the state"). To please the bourgeoisie, the eclecticism and sophistry of the Kautskys and Vanderveldes blur all that is concrete and precise in the class struggle and advance the general concept "transition," under which they may hide (as nine-tenths of the official Social-Democrats of our time do hide) their renunciation of revolution. As an eclectic and sophist, Vandervelde is more skilful and subtle than Kautsky; for the phrase "transition from the state in the narrow sense to the state in the broad sense," can serve as a means of evading all the problems of revolution, all the differences between revolution and reform, and even the difference between the Marxist and the liberal. For what educated European bourgeois would think of denying, "in general," "transitional stages" in this "general" sense?

Vandervelde writes:

"I agree with Guesde that it is impossible to socialise the means of production and exchange without the following two conditions having been fulfilled:

"1. The transformation of the present state as the organ of the rule of one class over another into what Menger calls a people's labour state, by the conquest of political power by the proletariat;

"2. Separation of the state as an organ of authority from the state as an

organ of guidance, or, to use Saint-Simon's expression, of the government of men from the administration of things" (p. 89).

Vandervelde puts this in italics, laying special emphasis on the importance of these propositions. But this is a sheer eclectical hodge-podge, a complete rupture with Marxism! The so-called "people's labour state" is just a paraphrase of the old "free people's state," which the German Social-Democrats paraded in the 'seventies and which Engels branded as an absurdity. The term "people's labour state" is a phrase worthy of petty-bourgeois democrats (like our Left Socialist-Revolutionaries), a phrase which substitutes non-class concepts for class concepts. Vandervelde places the conquest of state power by the proletariat (by one class) alongside of the "people's" state, and fails to see that the result is a hodge-podge. With Kautsky and his "pure democracy," the result is a similar hodge-podge, and a similar anti-revolutionary, philistine disregard of the tasks of the class revolution, of the class, proletarian dictatorship, of the class (proletarian) state.

Further, the government of men will disappear and give way to the administration of things only when the state in all forms disappears. By talking about this relatively distant future, Vandervelde overlays, obscures the tasks of tomorrow, viz., the overthrow of the bourgeoisie.

This trick is also equivalent to subserviency to the liberal bourgeoisie. The liberal is willing to talk about what will happen when it will not be necessary to govern men. Why not indulge in such innocent dreams? But about the proletariat having to crush the bourgeoisie's resistance to its expropriation—of that not a word. The class interests of the bourgeoisie demand it.

Socialism versus the state. This is Vandervelde's bow to the proletariat. It is not difficult to make a bow; every "democratic" politician knows how to make a bow to his electors. And under cover of a "bow," an anti-revolutionary, anti-proletarian meaning is insinuated.

Vandervelde extensively paraphrases Ostrogorsky to show what deceit, violence, corruption, mendacity, hypocrisy and oppression of the poor is hidden beneath the civilised, polished and perfumed exterior of modern bourgeois democracy. But he draws no conclusion from this. He fails to observe that bourgeois democracy suppresses the toiling and exploited masses, and that proletarian democracy will have to suppress the bourgeoisie. Kautsky and Vandervelde are blind to this. The class interests of the bourgeoisie, in whose wake these

petty-bourgeois traitors to Marxism are floundering, demand that this question be evaded, that it be hushed up, or that the necessity of such suppression be directly denied.

Petty-bourgeois eclecticism versus Marxism, sophistry versus dialectics, philistine reformism versus proletarian revolution—such should have been the title of Vandervelde's book.

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from December 1918 to February 1919

# COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES'

COMRADES, an extremely important task now confronts the workers' cooperative societies both in the economic field and in the political field. These two tasks are now obviously and inseparably connected in an economic and political struggle. As to the immediate tasks of the cooperative societies. I would like to stress the significance of "compromise with the cooperatives." The compromise of which there has been so much talk recently in the press differs fundamentally from the idea of compromise with the bourgeoisie—which is treason. The compromise we are talking about just now is of an entirely different kind. There is a vast difference between the Soviet government's compromise with Germany, which has yielded certain results, and a compromise between the working class and the bourgeoisie, which would be most pernicious and fatal to the country. I say that such a compromise would be but a mask for the utter betrayal of both the class struggle and the fundamental principles of socialism. To a Socialist who has made it his explicit duty to fight the bourgeoisie and capital, this distinction is self-evident.

We all know perfectly well that as far as our class struggle is concerned there can be only one alternative: either to recognise the power of capital or to recognise the power of the working class. We know that all attempts of the petty-bourgeois parties to form and pursue a policy of their own in the country are foredoomed to utter failure. We have clearly witnessed and experienced a number of attempts on the part of various petty-bourgeois parties or groups to pursue a policy of their own, and we see that such betwixt-and-between attempts are bound to end in failure. For quite specific reasons, only one of two central forces standing at diametrically opposite poles can exercise its rule in Russia and determine the trend of her destiny. I will even say more: the whole world is built and governed by one or the other of these central forces. And as regards Russia, it may be said quite definitely that, in view of certain specific conditions of economic life, only one of these forces can lead. As to the other, the

intermediate forces, they are numerous, but they can never play a decisive part in the life of the country.

The question the Soviet government has to tackle just now is an agreement between the cooperative societies and the Soviet state. Last April we retreated from the aims we had laid down and consented to make concessions. Of course, there should be no class cooperative societies in a country where all classes are being abolished; but, I repeat, the conditions of the time demanded a certain delay, and we effected it by postponing things for several months. But we all know that the government of the country will never depart from the position it now holds. We had to make this concession because at that time we were alone in the wide world, and the concession was due to the difficulties of our work. In view of the economic tasks undertaken by the proletariat, we were obliged to reconcile ourselves to and tolerate certain habits of the petty-bourgeois sections. The chief thing here is that we must, by one means or another, direct and coordinate the activities of the entire mass of toiling and exploited people. We must always bear in mind what the proletariat demands of us. The government of the people must reckon with the fact that various sections of the petty bourgeoisie will throw in their lot more and more with the working class, the ruling class, when the realities of life in the long run show that there is no other alternative, and that all hopes of some middle course in determining the political life of the country have definitely collapsed. All those fine slogans—such as the will of the people and a Constituent Assembly-slogans which were used as a screen for half-measures, were at once swept away when the people manifested their real will. You see yourselves what has happened-all these slogans, these half-measure slogans, have been shattered to atoms. We now find that this is taking place not only in Russia, but on a scale of world revolution.

I should like to explain the difference between the compromise which aroused such violent loathing among all ranks of the working class and the compromise we are now advocating, a compromise with the small peasantry as a whole, with the petty bourgeoisie as a whole. At the time of the Brest-Litovsk Peace, when we accepted its onerous terms, we were told that all hopes of a world revolution were in vain, that it could never be realised. We stood absolutely alone in the wide world. We know that many parties recoiled from us because of the Brest-Litovsk Peace and went over to the side of the

bourgeoisie. We had to go through many a dreadful experience. But a few months later the facts of life showed that there was and could be no other alternative, that there was no middle course.

When the German revolution broke out, it became clear to all that the revolution was spreading all over the world, that England, France and America were heading the same way—our way! When our petty-bourgeois democratic strata followed their protectors, they did not realise where they were being led by them, they did not realise that they were being led along the path of capitalism. Now we can see from the German revolution that these spokesmen, these protectors of the democracy, these Wilsons and the like, are imposing on the van-quished people treaties of their own a good deal worse than the Brest-Litovsk Treaty imposed on us. We clearly see that owing to the movement of events in the West, owing to the altered situation, international demagogy has now been punctured. The complection of every nation has now been fully revealed. Masks have been torn away, and all illusions have been shattered by the mighty battering-ram of world history.

Naturally, with these vacillating elements in our midst—and they are always to be found in every transitional period—it is incumbent on the Soviet government to bring to bear all its weight and influence to realise the tasks we are now undertaking in pursuance of the policy we began last April, when we postponed for a while the aims we had previously outlined, and deliberately and openly made a number of concessions.

It has been asked here—exactly at what point of our path do we happen to be. By now all Europe definitely sees that our revolution is no longer in the experimental stage, and they, the civilised nations, have changed their attitude towards us. They realise that what we are doing is a new and immense job; and what made it particularly hard for us was that practically all the time we stood absolutely alone, completely forgotten by the international proletariat. In this job it was our fate to commit a number of serious errors, which we are making no attempt to conceal. Of course, what we had to do was to unite the whole population and not cause any rifts. If we have not done so hitherto, we must make a beginning some time. We have already carried through an amalgamation with many organisations. Now we have to effect an amalgamation between the workers' cooperative societies and the Soviet organisations.

Last April we began to undertake organisational measures with a view to proceeding by experiment and making practical use of our accumulated social political forces. We proceeded to organise the supply and distribution of goods among the whole population. Testing every step, we proceeded to this work of organisation, an undertaking rendered all the more difficult by the economic backwardness of our country. Our efforts to reach agreement with the cooperative societies began last April, and the decree that was issued providing for complete amalgamation and the organisation of supply and distribution was based on these very principles. We know that the friction mentioned by the previous speaker in reference to St. Petersburg exists nearly everywhere. We know that such friction is absolutely inevitable, because we are at a point when two totally different apparatuses are meeting and amalgamating; nevertheless, we also know that this is inevitable and is a stage we have to go through. And you, too, must realise that the resistance which the workers' cooperatives have been putting up for so long was bound in the end to arouse distrust, and quite legitimate distrust, on the part of the Soviet government.

You say you want independence. It seems to me that anybody who makes such a demand risks arousing distrust. If you complain of friction and want to eliminate it, you must first of all abandon the idea of independence, for anybody who holds that view at a time when everything is tending to closer and closer amalgamation is by that very fact an opponent of the Soviet system. As soon as the workers' cooperatives amalgamate quite openly, honestly and frankly with the Soviet system, such friction will begin to disappear. I am perfectly well aware that when two groups amalgamate there is bound at first to be a certain amount of discordance in their work; but in the course of time, as the group which is absorbed earns the confidence of the one with which it is incorporated, all friction gradually disappears. On the other hand, if these two groups remain divided, constant inter-departmental friction is liable to arise. There is one thing I cannot understand: why this talk of independence? After all, we are all of the opinion that in the matter of both supply and distribution our society as a whole should represent one universal cooperative. We are all of the opinion that the cooperative societies are one of the gains of the socialist party. There lies the great difficulty of socialist gains; there lies the difficulty and aim of victory. Capitalism deliberately divided the various sections of the population. This division must

disappear once and for all, and society as a whole must be converted into a single cooperative society of the working people. There can be no talk, there must be no talk, of independence for individual groups.

I have just said that such a cooperative is the aim of the victory of socialism. That is why we say that whatever differences there may be on minor issues, we shall never agree to any compromise with capitalism; we shall not depart one step from the principles of our struggle. The compromise we are now about to make with certain strata of the social classes is not a compromise with the bourgeoisie, with capital, but with certain sections of the proletariat and the democracy. There is nothing to fear in this compromise because all dissension between these sections will disappear completely and without a trace in the fire of revolution. Today only one thing is needed, a unanimous desire to join this single and universal cooperative society with an open heart. What the Soviet government has done and what the cooperative societies have so far done must be merged. That is the meaning of the recent decree of the Soviet government. That is the line taken in many of the localities by the representatives of the Soviet state, without waiting for our decrees. The immense work done by the cooperative societies must absolutely be merged with the immense work done by the Soviet government. All sections of the population which are fighting for freedom must be fused into one strong organisation. We know that we have made many mistakes, especially in the months immediately following the October Revolution. But now, with the lapse of time, we shall work for complete unity and complete harmony among the population. And what this needs is that everything should be subordinated to the Soviet government, and that all illusions as to the "independence" either of particular strata or of the workers' cooperative societies should be abandoned as quickly as possible. Such hopes of "independence" can be cherished only by those who are still harbouring the hope of some sort of reversion to the past.

Formerly, the Western nations used to regard us and our whole revolutionary movement as a curiosity. They used to say: "Let the people amuse themselves; we shall see what comes of it....What funny people these Russians are!"

Well, these "funny Russians" have shown the world what their "amusement" means.

Just recently, when the German revolution began, one of the for-

eign consuls said to Zinoviev: "It still remains to be seen who got the most out of the Brest-Litovsk Peace, you or we."

He said that because everybody is saying the same thing. Everybody can see that this is only the beginning of a great world-wide revolution. It was we, the backward, "funny" Russian people, who began this great revolution.... It must be said that history moves in strange ways: it has fallen to a backward country to have the honour of leading the van of a great world movement. This movement is clearly seen and understood by the bourgeoisie all over the world. Germany, Belgium, Switzerland and Holland have all been seized by this conflagration.

This movement is growing stronger and stronger every day, and the revolutionary Soviet government is growing bigger and stronger all the time. That is why the bourgeoisie is now taking quite a different attitude. And that is why, now that an axe of world dimensions hangs over the head of capitalism, there can be no talk of independence for individual parties. The most outstanding example is America. America is one of the most democratic countries, a huge democratic social republic. Where, if not in this country, which has the widest suffrage and all the liberties of a free state, should all questions of rights be settled fairly?

But what do we find the Wilsons doing to defeated Germany. See what a picture of world relations is unfolding before our eyes! This picture, from which we get our idea of what the Wilson gentry are offering their friends, is a million and a trillion times more convincing. What we are arguing over, the Wilsons would settle in a trice. These gentry—the free billionaires, the most humane people in the world—would wean their friends in a trice even of thinking, let alone talking of "independence" of any sort. They would face you quite crudely and bluntly with the alternative: either you support the capitalist system or you support the Soviets. They would say: "You have to do this, for it is we, your friends—the British and Americans, the Wilsons, and the French, the Clemenceaus—who tell you to."

And so you cannot hope to preserve any kind of independence. You will not, and it is hopeless to dream of it. Now that, on the one hand, the issue has definitely arisen of their protecting their property, and, on the other, that the proletariat has found its sphere, there can be no middle course. Life must either firmly intertwine its branches with capital or more firmly with the Soviet Republic. It is now quite

clear to everybody that socialism has entered the period of its realisation. It is now clear to everyone that it is absolutely impossible to uphold or preserve petty-bourgeois ideals by giving the whole population the vote. The Wilson gentry may cherish this hope, or rather, not so much cherish the hope as endeavour to conceal their own designs by fostering such illusions, but I must say that you will not find many people nowadays who believe these fairy tales; if there still are any such people, they are historical rarities, curiosities, whose place is in the museum.

I must say that the divergent opinions which arose among you from the very beginning on the subject of preserving the "independence" of the cooperative societies are nothing but attempts which have not the least hope of yielding any positive results. This struggle is not a serious one. People forget that the resolutions passed every day by the strongest class in the world—and which I have no doubt will be passed unanimously by our congress too—hail the dictatorship of only one proletariat in the world. By passing this resolution, our congress will enter on a path from which no bridge extends, or can extend, to that "independence," about which there has been so much talk here today. You know that Karl Liebknecht was not only in definite opposition to the petty-bourgeois peasantry, but also in opposition to the cooperative movement. You know that Scheidemann and Co. consider him for this reason a visionary and fanatic, yet you yourselves have sent your greetings to him, just as you have to McLean. By thus expressing your solidarity on questions with the big world leaders, you have burnt your bridges. You must stick firmly to your position, for at this moment you are defending not only yourselves and your rights, but also the rights of Liebknecht and McLean. Many a time have I heard the Russian Mensheviks condemning compromise and fulminating against those who tried to come to an understanding with the lackeys of the Kaiser. And the Russian Mensheviks were not the only sinners in this respect. The whole world pointed its finger at us and branded us as "compromisers." But now that the world revolution has begun, now that they have to negotiate with the Haases and Kautskys, it is we who are entitled to say, in the words of the good old Russian proverb: "Let's step aside and see how pretty we are sitting."

We are aware of our shortcomings, and they are easy enough to point to. But to the outsider things look different from what they really are. There was a time when there was scarcely anybody who did not con-

demn our conduct and our policy; but now we know whole parties that have come over to our side and want to work with us.<sup>42</sup> The wheel of the world revolutionary movement has begun to turn so fast that we positively need not fear any compromise.

I believe that our congress, too, will find the right way out of the situation. And there is only one right way, and that is to merge the cooperative societies with the Soviet system. You know that England, France, America and Spain looked upon what we are doing as an experiment, but now they see things differently: they are looking to see whether all is well in their own countries. Of course, they are much stronger than we are, physically, materially and financially, but for all their exterior gloss, we know that internally they are rotting; they are stronger than we are today with the same strength and power which made Germany strong at the time the Brest-Litovsk Peace was concluded. But what do we find now? At that time everybody, positively everybody, abandoned us. But now, with every month that we uphold the consolidation of the Soviet Republic, we protect not only ourselves, but also the cause initiated by Liebknecht and McLean; and we already find England, France, America and Spain being infected by the same malady, kindled by the same fire as Germany—the fire of the universal, world-wide struggle of the working class against imperialism.

Speech at Third Congress of Workers' Cooperative Societies, December 7, 1918.

Published in Speeches of V. Lenin, V. Milyutin and V. Nogin at the Third Congress of the Workers' Cooperative Societies, 1919.

# THE REVOLUTION AND THE PEASANTS

COMRADES, in my opinion, the composition of this congress <sup>43</sup> is in itself an indication of the profound change and the great progress that has been made by us, by the Soviet Republic, in the work of socialist construction, and in particular in the sphere of agricultural relations, which are of supreme importance to our country. The present congress combines representatives of the Land Departments, the Committees of Poor Peasants and the agricultural communes, a combination which shows that within a short space of time, within a single year, our revolution has made great strides in reconstructing those relations whose reconstruction presents the most difficulty, relations which in all previous revolutions constituted the greatest hindrance to the cause of socialism, and which require to be most thoroughly reconstructed if the triumph of socialism is to be ensured.

The first stage, the first period in the development of our revolution since October, was mainly devoted to vanquishing the common enemy of the peasantry as a whole, namely, the landlords.

You are all well aware of the fact that even the February Revolution—the revolution of the bourgeoisie, the revolution of the compromisers—promised the peasants this victory over the landlords, but that this promise was not fulfilled. It was only the October Revolution, it was only the victory of the working class in the cities, it was only the Soviet regime that has enabled the whole of Russia, from end to end, to rid itself of the ulcer, that legacy of the old feudal system, the old feudal exploitation, landlordism and the oppression exercised by the landlords over the peasantry as a whole, over all the peasants without distinction.

This struggle against the landlords was one in which all the peasants were bound to participate, and actually did participate. This struggle united the poor labouring peasants, who do not live by exploiting the

labour of others. And it also united the comfortable and even wealthy section of the peasantry, which cannot get along without hired labour.

As long as our revolution was engrossed in this task, as long as we had to exert every effort in order that the power of the landlords might be really swept away and entirely abolished by the independent movement of the peasants, aided by the movement of the city workers, the revolution was a revolution of the peasants as a whole and could therefore not go beyond bourgeois limits.

It had still not touched the more powerful and more modern enemy of all the working people—capital. It therefore threatened to end half-way, just as did the majority of the revolutions in Western Europe, in which a temporary alliance of the urban workers and the whole peasantry succeeded in sweeping away the monarchy and the relics of mediævalism, in sweeping away landlordism, or the power of the landlords, more or less thoroughly, but never succeeded in undermining the actual foundations of the power of capital.

It was this much more important and much more difficult task that our revolution began to tackle in the summer and autumn of this year. The tide of counter-revolutionary uprisings which rose in the summer of this year—when the attack of the West-European imperialists and of their hirelings, the Czechoslovaks, on Russia was joined by all the exploiting and oppressing elements in Russian life—awakened a new spirit and new life in the peasants.

All these revolts in practice united the European imperialists, their hirelings, the Czechoslovaks, and all those who in Russia remained on the side of the landlords and capitalists in a desperate struggle against the Soviet government. And following them, all the village kulaks also rose in revolt.

The peasantry ceased to be united. The peasants, who had fought as one man against the landlords, split into two camps: the camp of the poor labouring peasants, who together with the workers continued steadfastly to strive for the realisation of socialism and proceeded from fighting the landlords to fighting capital, the power of money and the abuse of the great agrarian reform by the kulaks—and the camp of the more prosperous peasants. This struggle, which finally severed the propertied, exploiting classes from the revolution, placed our revolution on those socialist lines which the working class so firmly and determinedly desired to place it in October, but along which it can never successfully direct the revolution if it does

not meet with enlightened, determined and solid support in the rural districts.

It is this that constitutes the significance of the revolution which took place in the summer and autumn of this year even in the most remote and out-of-the-way villages of Russia, a revolution which was not as demonstrative, not as striking and conspicuous as the revolution of October of last year, but the significance of which is incomparably deeper and greater.

The formation of the Committee of Poor Peasants in the rural districts marked a turning point and showed that the working class of the cities, which in October had united with the entire peasantry to smash the principal enemy of free, labouring and socialist Russia, the landlords, had advanced from this task to a much more difficult and historically superior and truly socialist task, namely, to carry the conscious socialist struggle into the rural districts and to arouse the minds of the peasants also. The great agrarian revolution—the proclamation in October of the abolition of private property in land, the proclamation of the socialisation of the land—would inevitably have remained a revolution only on paper had not the urban workers aroused the rural proletariat, the poor peasants, the labouring peasants, who constitute the vast majority. This group, like the middle peasants, do not exploit the labour of others and are not interested in exploitation, and therefore are capable of progressing, and have already progressed, beyond the joint struggle against the landlords to the general proletarian struggle against capital, against the power of the exploiters who rely on the power of money and movable property. They have progressed from the task of ridding Russia of the landlords to the task of establishing a socialist system.

This step was an extremely difficult one. Those who doubted the socialist character of our revolution prophesied our inevitable failure. Yet it is on this step that the whole work of socialist construction in the countryside now depends. The formation of the Committees of Poor Peasants, the wide network of these committees which has spread all over Russia, their transformation—which is now about to begin, and in part has already begun—into fully competent village Soviets, the duty of which will be to lay in the rural districts the foundation of socialist construction—the power of the working people—therein lies the genuine pledge that we have not confined ourselves to the tasks to which the usual bourgeois-democratic revolutions in West-European

countries confined themselves. Having destroyed the monarchy and the mediæval power of the landlords, we are now passing to the work of genuine socialist construction. In the rural districts this is most difficult, but at the same time, most important work. It is gratifying work. We see the sole, yet true and undoubtedly abiding pledge that the work of socialist construction in Russia has now been placed on a firmer foundation in the fact that we have aroused the minds of the labouring section of the peasants, in the fact that they have been finally severed from the interests of the capitalist class by the wave of capitalist revolts, in the fact that the labouring peasants in the Committees of Poor Peasants and the Soviets, which are now being reconstructed, are being merged more and more closely with the urban workers. It has now acquired a basis among the vast masses of the rural, agricultural population as well.

It cannot be denied that in a peasant country like Russia socialist construction is a very difficult thing. It cannot be denied that it was comparatively easy to sweep away an enemy like tsardom, like the power of the landlords, like landlordism. That task could be accomplished in the centre in a few days; it could be accomplished all over the country in a few weeks. But by its very nature, the task we are now tackling can be accomplished only by extremely persistent and prolonged effort. Here we shall have to fight step by step and inch by inch. We shall have to fight for a new, socialist Russia; we shall have to fight for the social cultivation of the land.

And it goes without saying that a revolution of this kind, the transition from small, individual peasant farms to the social cultivation of the land, will require considerable time and can in no case be accomplished instantly.

We know very well that in countries where small-peasant economy prevails the transition to socialism cannot be effected except by a series of gradual preliminary stages. It was because we understood this that the first aim set in the October Revolution was merely to sweep away and destroy the power of the landlords. The February fundamental law on the socialisation of the land, which as you know was passed by the unanimous decision both of the Communists and of the members of the Soviet government who did not share the views of the Communists, was at the same time an expression of the will and mind of the vast majority of the peasants. It was a proof of the fact that the working class, the workers' Communist Party, under-

standing what their task is, are persistently and patiently advancing towards the new socialist construction—advancing by a series of gradual measures, by arousing the consciousness of the labouring section of the peasantry and advancing only in the measure that the consciousness of the peasants is aroused, and only in the measure that the peasantry is organised independently.

We fully realise that such vast upheavals in the lives of tens of millions of people as the transition from small individual peasant farming to the social cultivation of the land, affecting as they do the most profound roots of life and habits, can be accomplished only by prolonged effort, and can in general be accomplished only when necessity compels people to reshape their whole lives.

And now, after a long and desperate war all over the world, we clearly discern the beginnings of a socialist revolution all over the world. This necessity has arisen even for the most backward of countries and—irrespective of any theoretical views or socialist doctrines—it is impressing on everybody the fact that it is impossible to go on living in the old way.

When the country has suffered from such sore devastation and collapse, when we see this collapse spreading all over the world, when we see the achievement of culture, science and technology gained by mankind in the course of many centuries being swept away in these four years of criminal, destructive and predatory war, and the whole of Europe, and not Russia only, returning to a state of barbarism-in the face of these facts, the broad masses, and particularly the peasantry, who perhaps have suffered most from this war, are coming clearly to understand that tremendous efforts are required, that every nerve must be strained in order to get rid of the legacy of this accursed war which has bequeathed us nothing but ruin and want. It is impossible to live in the old way, in the way we lived before the war. And the waste of human labour and effort associated with individual, smallscale peasant farming can no longer be tolerated. The productivity of labour would be doubled or trebled, the economy of human labour in agriculture and human enterprise would be doubled and trebled, if disunited, small-scale farming were discarded for social farming.

The impoverishment bequeathed us by the war simply does not allow us to restore the old small-scale peasant form of farming. Not only have the mass of the peasants been awakened by the war, not only has the war shown them what marvels of technology now exist,

marvels adapted for the extermination of human beings, but it has suggested to them the idea that these marvels of technology should be used primarily to reshape the branch of production which is the most common in the country, in which the greatest number of people are engaged, but which at the same time is most backward-agriculture. Not only has this idea been suggested, but the monstrous horrors of modern war have made people understand what forces have been created by modern science, and how they are being wasted in a frightful and senseless war, and that these very forces of science are the only means of salvation from those horrors. It is our obligation and duty to use them to put this most backward branch of production-agriculture—on new lines, to reshape it and to transform agriculture from a form of production conducted in the old, unenlightened way into a form of production based on science and the achievements of technology. The war has suggested this idea much more powerfully than any of us may think. But not only has the war suggested this idea; it has also made it impossible to restore production in the old way.

Those who cherish the hope that after this war it will be possible to restore the state of affairs that existed before the war, that the old system and methods of production can be resumed, are mistaken—and are coming to realise their mistake more and more clearly every day. The war has caused such frightful devastation that many a small farm now possesses neither draught cattle, nor stock, nor implements. We can no longer tolerate such a dissipation of the labour of the people. The labouring peasants, the poor peasants, who have borne the greatest sacrifices for the revolution and have suffered most from the war, did not take the land away from the landlords in order that it might fall into the hands of the new kulaks. The very facts of life are now compelling these labouring peasants squarely to face the question of turning to the social cultivation of the land as the only means of restoring agriculture which has now been shattered and destroyed by the war, and as the only means of escape from the ignorant, downtrodden and oppressed condition to which the whole mass of the agricultural population was condemned by capitalism—the ignorance and oppression which permitted the capitalists to inflict the war on mankind for four years and from which the toilers of all countries are resolving with revolutionary energy and fervour to rid themselves at all costs.

These are conditions that had to be created on a world scale in order

that this most difficult and at the same time most important socialist reform, that this most important and fundamental socialist measure should be tackled, as it is being tackled in Russia. The formation of the Committees of Poor Peasants, and this joint congress of land departments, committees of poor peasants and agricultural communes, taken in conjunction with the struggle which took place in the country districts in the summer and autumn of this year, go to show that the minds of very wide sections of the labouring peasantry have been awakened, and that the peasantry itself, the majority of the labouring peasants, is aspiring to the introduction of social cultivation of the land. Of course, I repeat, we must tackle this great reform gradually. Here, nothing can be done in a hurry.

But I must remind you that the fundamental law on the socialisation of the land became a foregone conclusion the very next day after the Revolution of October 25. At the very first session of the first organ of Soviet power, the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets, a law was enacted not only proclaiming that private property in land was abolished forever, not only that landlordism was swept away, but also, incidentally, that the farm property, draught cattle and implements which passed into the possession of the people and of the labouring peasants should also become public property and cease to be the private property of individual farms. And on the fundamental question of our present aims, of the way we desire the land to be disposed of, and what we call on the supporters of the Soviet government, the labouring peasants, to do in this respect, Article 11 of the law on the socialisation of the land adopted in February 1918 states that the aim in agriculture is to develop collective farming—as being the more advantageous from the point of view of economy of labour and products—at the expense of individual farming and with the object of passing on to socialist farming.

When we passed this law complete unanimity and agreement did not exist between the Communists and the other parties. On the contrary, we passed this law at a time when within the Soviet state and the Soviet government there was a union between the Communists and the party of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, who did not share the Communist views. Nevertheless, we arrived at an unanimous decision, to which we adhere to this day, remembering, as I repeat, that the transition from individual farming to the social cultivation of the land cannot be effected all at once. The struggle which developed

in the cities was more simple. In the cities thousands of workers were confronted by one capitalist and it did not require much effort to remove him.

The struggle which developed in the rural districts, however, was much more complex. At first there was the general assault of the peasants on the landlords; at first there was the complete abolition of the power of the landlords in such a way that it would never be restored again. This was followed by a struggle among the peasants themselves, among whom new capitalists arose in the shape of the kulaks, in the shape of exploiters and profiteers who used their surplus grain to enrich themselves at the expense of the starving nonagricultural parts of Russia. Here a new struggle had to be fought, and you all know that in the summer of this year this struggle led to the outbreak of a number of revolts. We do not say of the kulak, as we do of the landlord and capitalist, that he must be deprived of all his property. What we say is that we must break the kulak's resistance to indispensable measures, such as the grain monopoly, which he is violating in order to enrich himself by selling grain surpluses at profiteering prices, while the workers and peasants in the non-agricultural areas are suffering the torments of starvation. And our policy here always was to wage a struggle as merciless as that waged against the landlords and the capitalists.

But there also remained the question of the attitude of the poor section of the toiling peasantry to the middle peasantry. Our policy in relation to the middle peasant has always been to form an alliance with him. He is no enemy of Soviet institutions; he is no enemy of the proletariat and socialism. He will, of course, vacillate and will consent to adopt socialism only when he sees a definite and convincing example showing that it is necessary. You cannot convince this middle peasant, of course, by theoretical arguments or by agitational speeches; and we are not counting on doing so. But he can be convinced by the example and the solid front of the labouring section of the peasantry; he can be convinced by an alliance of the labouring peasantry with the proletariat. And here we count on a prolonged and gradual process of conviction and on a number of transitional measures which will embody the agreement of the proletarian, socialist section of the population, the agreement of the Communists-who are conducting a resolute fight against capital in all its forms—with the middle peasantry.

And it is because we realise this state of affairs and because we realise that the task confronting us in the rural districts is incomparably more difficult that we are tackling the question in the way it was tackled in the law on the socialisation of the land. You know that this law proclaimed the abolition of private property in land and introduced the equal division of land. You know that the realisation of this law was begun in this spirit, and that it was put into effect in the majority of the agricultural districts with the unanimous consent both of the Communists and of people who at that time did not yet share communist views. The law contains the thesis I have just read to you, namely, that our common task and our common aim is the transition to socialist farming, to collective land tenure and the social cultivation of the land.

As the period of construction draws on, both the peasants who have already settled on the land and the hundreds of thousands and millions of prisoners-of-war who are now returning from captivity, worn and exhausted, are coming to realise more and more clearly the vast scope of the work we have to perform in order to restore agriculture and emancipate the peasant forever from his neglected, downtrodden and ignorant condition. It is becoming more and more clear to them that the only permanent way of escape, one that will bring the masses of the peasants nearer to a cultured life and place them in a position of equality with other citizens, is the social cultivation of the land. And the Soviet government is now systematically striving by gradual measures to bring about the social cultivation of the land. It is for the sake of the social cultivation of the land that the communes and the state farms are being formed. The importance of this form of farming is pointed out in the law on the socialisation of the land.

In the section of the law which specifies who is entitled to use the land, you will find that among the persons and institutions entitled to do so, first place is assigned to the state, the second to public organisations, the third to agricultural communes and the fourth to agricultural cooperative societies. I again draw your attention to the fact that these fundamental theses of the law on the socialisation of the land were laid down when the Communist Party was carrying out not only its own will, but was making deliberate concessions to those who in one way or another expressed the mind and will of the middle peasantry. We made such concessions, and are still making them. We concluded and are still concluding agreements of this kind,

because the transition to the collective form of agriculture, to the social cultivation of the land, to state farms, to communes, cannot be accomplished all at once; it demands the exercise of stubborn and persistent influence by the Soviet government. The Soviet government has assigned a billion rubles for the improvement of agriculture on condition that social cultivation of the land be adopted. This law shows that we desire to influence the mass of middle peasants by the force of example, by inviting them to improve their methods of farming, and that we count only on the gradual influence of such measures to bring about this profound and important revolution in agriculture in Russia.

The alliance of the Committees of Poor Peasants, agricultural communes and Land Departments represented at this congress shows us, and fully assures us, that by this transition to the social cultivation of the land the matter has now been placed on correct lines, on truly socialist lines. By steady and systematic work along these lines an increase in the productivity of labour must be secured. For this purpose we must adopt the best agricultural methods and employ the agronomical forces of Russia so that we may be able to work the best organised farms, which hitherto have served as a source of enrichment for individuals, as the source of a new growth of capitalism, of a new bondage, a new enslavement of wage labourers, but which now, under the law on the socialisation of the land and the complete abolition of private property in land, must serve as a source of agricultural knowledge and culture and of increased productivity for the millions of labouring people. This alliance of the urban workers with the toiling peasantry, the formation of the Committees of Poor Peasants and the new elections to them as Soviet institutions are a pledge that agricultural Russia has now entered on a path which is being adopted later, but more surely by one West-European country after another. It was much harder for them to start the revolution, because their enemy was not a rotten autocracy, but a highly cultured and united capitalist class. But you know that this revolution has begun. You know that the revolution has not been confined to Russia, and that our chief hope, our chief support, is the proletariat of the more advanced countries of Western Europe, and that this chief support of the world revolution has begun to stir. And we are firmly convinced, and the course of the German revolution has shown it, that in those countries the transition to socialist farming, the application of higher

forms of agricultural science and the union of the labouring agricultural population will proceed more rapidly and be effected more easily than in our country.

In alliance with the workers of the towns and with the socialist proletariat of the whole world, the labouring peasants of Russia can now be certain that they will overcome all their misfortunes, beat off the attacks of the imperialists and accomplish that without which the emancipation of the working people is impossible, viz., the social cultivation of the land, the gradual but steady transition from small individual farming to the social cultivation of the land.

Pravda, No. 272, December 14, 1918.

# ROUGH DRAFT OF RULES FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF SOVIET INSTITUTIONS "

T

COLLECTIVE discussion and decision of all questions of administration in Soviet institutions must be accompanied by the precisely defined responsibility of every person holding any Soviet post for the performance of definite and clearly and unambiguously specified functions and practical jobs.

Henceforth, this rule, without which it will be impossible to select the most suitable people for each office and job or to exercise effective control over them, must be *unreservedly obeyed*.

Accordingly, every Soviet body and every Soviet institution without exception shall immediately:

First, adopt a decision precisely distributing the work and responsibilities among all the members of their body or its officials.

Second, define the exact responsibility of all persons entrusted with the performance of any duties whatever, but especially such as concern the speedy and proper collection and distribution of materials and products.

This rule is binding on all Soviet institutions, and in particular on local, district, urban and other Councils of National Economy and Economic Departments of Executive Committees. Such Departments and Councils of National Economy shall immediately assign responsibility to definite persons for the speedy and proper collection of each of the raw materials and products needed by the population.

All leading Soviet bodies—Executive Committees, provincial and city Soviets, etc.—shall immediately reorganise their work with a view to giving prime place to effective control. This will ensure the fulfilment of the decisions of the central authorities and of the local institutions. Other kinds of work are to be turned over, as far as possible, to sub-committees consisting of a small number of members of the given body.

II

With a view to combating red tape and the more effective disclosure of abuses, and also to the exposure and removal of dishonest officials ensconced in Soviet institutions, the following rules are hereby established:

Every Soviet institution shall post notices of its reception hours outside as well as inside its premises, so that all may be able to see them without having to obtain passes. The premises assigned for the reception of the public shall be freely accessible, without the necessity for any passes whatever.

Every Soviet institution shall keep a register in which shall be recorded in the briefest form the name of every visitor, the nature of his business, and to whom it has been entrusted.

Sundays and holidays shall be reception days.

Officials of the State Control shall have the right to be present at all receptions, and it shall be their duty to attend from time to time during reception hours to examine the visitors' register, and to draw up a report of their visit and the result of their examination of the register and interrogation of the public.

The Commissariats of Labour, State Control and Justice shall everywhere organise information bureaus, which shall be open to all without passes and free of charge, reception on Sundays being compulsory; the said Commissariats shall widely announce to the public the days and hours the bureaus are open.

It shall be the duty of these information bureaus, not only to give all information requested, orally or in writing, but also to draw up written declarations free of charge for persons who are illiterate or unable to draw up such declarations properly themselves. It shall be obligatory to enlist the services for work on these bureaus of representatives of all parties eligible for representation on the Soviets, as well as of parties which are not represented in the government, and also representatives of the non-party trade unions and non-party unions of intellectuals.

#### III

The task of defending the Soviet Republic imperatively calls for the greatest economy of forces and the most productive utilisation of the labour of the people.

With these ends in view it is ordered—in the first place in regard to all Soviet institutions, later to be extended to every enterprise and body—that:

1. Every more or less independent department of every Soviet institution without exception shall within three days submit to the local Executive Committee (and in Moscow to the People's Commissariat of Justice as well) brief information on the following: (a) name of institution; (b) name of department; (c) nature of its work, in the briefest form; (d) number of sub-departments, sections, or other divisions, with a list of such; (e) number of employees, male and female; (f) volume of work, calculated as far as possible, for example, in number of cases handled, volume of correspondence, or other indices.

Local Executive Committees (in Moscow, the Executive Committee of the Soviet of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, in agreement with the People's Commissariat of Justice and the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee) shall immediately: (1) take measures to verify whether the above rules are being promptly and properly observed; (2) draw up within one week after the aforesaid information has been received a plan for coordinating, uniting and merging departments which are engaged in similar or kindred affairs.

The commissions which the above-mentioned institutions charge with this task shall include representatives of the Departments for the Interior, Justice, State Control and Labour, as well as of other departments, as and when necessary. The commissions shall submit to the Council of Peoples Commissars and the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee brief weekly reports on what has been done to merge kindred departments and to economise labour.

- 2. In every city in which there are kindred departments or institutions—central, regional, city, provincial or district—the highest institution shall immediately set up a commission for the purpose of coordinating and amalgamating all these institutions, with a view to the maximum economy of forces, this commission to be guided by the rules and schedule indicated in clause 1.
- 3. These same commissions (clauses 1 and 2) are instructed, and on the same grounds, to take urgent measures to substitute female labour for male labour to the utmost extent and to draw up a list of males who can be transferred to work in the army or for the army,

or to other work of an operative and practical and not of an office nature.

4. These same commissions (clauses 1 and 2) are instructed, in agreement with the local organisations of the Russian Communist Party [R.C.P.], to make such alteration in staffs as to leave members of the R.C.P. (of not less than two years' standing) only in leading and responsible posts; all other posts to be filled by non-party people, or by members of other parties, so as to release as large a number of members of the R.C.P. as possible for other work.

All organisations of the R.C.P. shall within one week from the date of publication of the present order of the Central Committee of the R.C.P. enter on all membership and registration cards *the* date on which the respective members joined the Bolshevik Party.

In the absence of this information, and if it is impossible to obtain same (and to have it verified and signed by not less than three members of the R.C.P. of two years' standing and over), such membership or registration cards shall be marked: "Date of joining the Party unknown."

Every member of the R.C.P. holding any Soviet post must immediately make a brief entry in his membership card stating what parties he belonged to, or was associated with, during the past *five* years, the entry to be certified by the chairman or secretary of his party organisation.

December 12, 1918.

First published in Lenin Miscellany, Vol. VIII, 1928.

# PROBLEMS OF THE MOMENT

COMRADES, the Allies have proclaimed a crusade against Soviet Russia. They are busily carrying on propaganda among their workers, telling them that the Bolsheviks are backed only by a minority of the people. This absurd and foolish story, which here in our country we know to be so absurd that nobody even pays any attention to it, can be so easily disseminated in Western Europe only because the entire press is in the hands of the bourgeoisie.

Lenin refuted the fabrications of the Allies by pointing to the growth of Bolshevik influence at the Congresses of Soviets. Whereas the Bolsheviks represented only one-seventh of the delegates at the First Congress, they represented 51 per cent at the Second, 66 per cent at the Fifth and 97 per cent at the Sixth. The Allies are taking the field against us because we say we will not pay the debts incurred by the tsar; if the tsar or his relatives wish to pay them out of their own pocket, we have no objection.

Pointing to the growth of the revolutionary movement in France and England, and comparing the Allies' offensive against us with that of the Germans, Lenin showed that it would spell the doom of Entente imperialism. The more overbearing these new robbers become, the nearer they approach the edge of the pit which they themselves are digging.

Every step they take and every soldier they send to Russian territory tends to hasten their inevitable doom; and however brutally and savagely the Allies may behave, our cause is secure, for it is backed by the conviction of the working millions that their cause is just. The Allies are heading even faster than the Germans towards the abyss into which they will at length plunge.

In the second part of his speech Lenin dealt with the subject of policy towards the petty-bourgeois parties. The petty-bourgeois parties

call themselves Socialists, but a title, of course, means nothing; we know, for example, that there are banks which call themselves "mutual aid societies," but that actually this title is a cover for downright robbery.

It should be borne in mind that only the workers, the poor, the exploited, can become Socialists, whereas the intermediate classes will always vacillate.

Lenin showed that a change of attitude towards the middle strata, the petty bourgeois, was essential. There is no need to fear them, there is no need to fear that they will corrupt our ranks. On the contrary, we shall assimilate them all, whereas nobody can assimilate us.

Newspaper account of speech at a workers' conference, Moscow, December 14, 1918.

Pravda, No. 275, December 18, 1918.

# IN MEMORY OF PROSHYAN

I HAD an opportunity to get to know Comrade Proshyan and learn to value him when we worked together on the Council of People's Commissars at the end of last year and the beginning of this, when the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries marched in alliance with us. Proshyan stood out at once because of his profound devotion to the revolution and to socialism. Not all the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries could be called Socialists; in fact, the majority of them could not. But Proshyan could, for in spite of his fidelity to the ideology of the Russian Narodniks, an unsocialistic ideology, one could see that he was a deeply convinced Socialist. In a way of his own, not through Marxism, not through the ideas of the class struggle of the proletariat, this man came to be a Socialist; and when we worked together on the Council of People's Commissars, many a time I saw Comrade Proshyan resolutely siding with the Bolshevik-Communists against his own colleagues, the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, when they voiced the views of the small proprietors and were hostile to the Communists' measures in the sphere of agriculture.

I particularly recall a conversation I had with Comrade Proshyan not long before the Brest-Litovsk Peace. It then seemed that no serious differences divided us any longer. Proshyan spoke of the need for amalgamating our parties and said that even those of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries who had been furtherst removed from communism (that word was not yet in general use then) had been quite perceptibly and markedly drawn towards it during the time we had been working together on the Council of People's Commissars. I was guarded in my reply to Proshyan's proposal and said that it was premature, but did not deny that we had been drawn closer together in our practical work.

With the Brest-Litovsk Peace came complete divergence, and, with Proshyan's revolutionary consistency and strength of conviction,

divergence was bound to lead to a direct, even an armed, struggle. That matters could go to the length of a revolt, to such lengths as the treachery of Commander-in-Chief Muravyov, a Left Socialist-Revolutionary, was something which I confess I did not expect. But Proshyan's case has revealed to me how deeply rooted, even in the most sincere and convinced Socialists among the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, is the sentiment of patriotism, and how differences in general ideological principles are inevitably bound to manifest themselves at crucial turns in history. The subjectivism of the Narodniks led even the best of them to a fatal mistake, and they allowed themselves to be dazzled by a spectre of monstrous power, namely, German imperialism. Any other way of combating this imperialism other than revolt, and what is more at that very moment, heedless of the objective conditions of our international situation, seemed from the point of view of a revolutionary to be quite impermissible. This was a repetition of the mistake which in 1907 turned the Socialist-Revolutionaries into unqualified "boycotters" of the Stolypin Duma. Only, in the midst of stern revolutionary battles, the mistakes exacted a more drastic retribution and drove Proshyan into the path of armed struggle against the Soviet government.

For all that, Proshyan did more to consolidate the Soviet state before July 1918 than he did to undermine it after. And in the international situation that has arisen since the German revolution, a new and more durable step on Proshyan's part towards communism would have been inevitable had it not been prevented by his untimely death.

Pravda, No. 277, December 20, 1918.

# "DEMOCRACY" AND DICTATORSHIP

THE few issues of the Berlin Rote Fahne [The Red Flag]\* and the Vienna Weckruf [The Call] †—the organ of the Communist Party of German Austria—which have reached Moscow show that the traitors to socialism who supported the war of the imperialist pirates, all the Scheidemanns and Eberts, the Austerlitzes and Renners, are meeting with well-deserved resistance from the true representatives of the revolutionary proletarians of Germany and Austria. We warmly greet these two organs, which are indicative of the virility and growth of the Third International.

Evidently, the principal issue of the revolution in Germany and in Austria now is: Constituent Assembly or Soviet government? All the representatives of the bankrupt Second International, from Scheidemann to Kautsky, stand for the former and call their point of view defence of "democracy" (Kautsky even went so far as to say "pure democracy"), as against dictatorship. I have examined Kautsky's views in detail in a pamphlet which has just appeared in Moscow and Petrograd entitled *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*. ‡ I shall try briefly to outline the essence of the question in dispute, which has now become a practical issue in all the advanced capitalist countries.

The Scheidemanns and Kautskys speak of "pure democracy," or of "democracy" in general, in order to deceive the masses and to conceal from them the *bourgeois* character of *modern* democracy. Let the bourgeoisie continue to retain the whole apparatus of state power,

<sup>\*</sup>Official organ of the Communist Party of Germany founded by Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg in November, 1918.—Ed.

<sup>†</sup> Official organ of the Communist Party of German Austria from November, 1918, to January 15, 1919, when its name was changed to Die soziale Revolution. On July 23, 1919, the name was again changed to Die Rote Fahne.—Ed.

<sup>\$</sup> See pages 347-436 in this volume.—Ed.

let a handful of exploiters continue to use the old bourgeois state machine! The bourgeoisie, of course, like to call elections conducted under such conditions "free," "equal," "democratic" and "popular," because these words serve to conceal the truth, to conceal the fact that the means of production and political power still remain in the hands of the exploiters, and that therefore there can be no thought of real liberty and real equality for the exploited, *i.e.*, for the overwhelming majority of the population. The bourgeoisie finds it advantageous and necessary to conceal the *bourgeois* character of modern democracy from the people and to depict it as democracy in general, or as "pure democracy"; and in repeating this, the Scheidemanns, and also the Kautskys, *in fact*, abandon the standpoint of the proletariat and desert to the side of the bourgeoisie.

Marx and Engels, the last time they jointly signed a preface to *The Communist Manifesto* (1872), deemed it necessary especially to draw the attention of the workers to the fact that the proletariat cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made (i.e., bourgeois) state machine and use it for its own purposes, but that it must break it, smash it. The renegade Kautsky has written a whole pamphlet about the "dictatorship of the proletariat" in which he conceals this extremely important Marxian truth from the workers and absolutely distorts Marxism. It goes without saying that the praises which Scheidemann and Co. lavished upon this pamphlet were the well-deserved praises that the agents of the bourgeoisie lavish upon those who desert to the side of the bourgeoisie.

To speak of pure democracy, of democracy in general, of equality, liberty, and popular institutions, when the workers and all the toilers are starving, ill-clad, ruined and tormented, not only by capitalist wage-slavery, but also by four years of predatory war, while the capitalists and the profiteers continue to retain their ill-gotten "property" and their "ready-made" apparatus of state power, means scoffing at the toilers and the exploited.

It means flying in the face of the fundamental truths of Marxism, which taught the workers: you must utilise bourgeois democracy as something which is an enormous historical advance over feudalism, but you must not for a moment forget the bourgeois character of this "democracy," its historically determined conditional and limited character; you must not share the "superstitious belief" in the "state," you must not forget that even under the most democratic republic,

and not only under a monarchy, the state is nothing more than a machine for the suppression of one class by another.

The bourgeoisie is obliged to be hypocritical and to describe the (bourgeois) democratic republic as "popular government," or as democracy in general, or as pure democracy, when as a matter of fact it is a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, a dictatorship of the exploiters over the toiling masses. The Scheidemanns and Kautskys, the Austerlitzes and Renners (now, unfortunately, with the aid of Friedrich Adler) support this lie and hypocrisy. But the Marxists, the Communists, expose it and tell the workers and the toiling masses the straight and open truth, viz., that a democratic republic, Constituent Assembly, popular elections, etc., all represent the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, and that there is no other way of emancipating labour from the yoke of capital except by substituting the dictatorship of the proletariat for this dictatorship. The dictatorship of the proletariat is alone able to emancipate mankind from the yoke of capital, from the lies, the sham and hypocrisy of bourgeois democracy, which is democracy for the rich; it alone is able to establish democracy for the poor, i.e., to make the benefits of democracy really available to the workers and the poorest peasants, whereas at the present time (even in the most democratic-bourgeois-republic) the benefits of democracy are really unavailable to the overwhelming majority of the working people.

Take, for example, the right of assembly and freedom of the press. The Scheidemanns and Kautskys, the Austerlitzes and Renners assure the workers that the present elections to the Constituent Assembly in Germany and in Austria are "democratic." It is a lie, because, as an actual fact, the capitalists, the exploiters, the landlords and the profiteers own nine-tenths of the best premises suitable for meetings, and nine-tenths of the paper supplies, of the printing plants, etc. The workers in the towns and the farm hands and day labourers in the rural districts are, as a fact, kept out of democracy both by the "sacred right of property" (guarded by Messieurs the Kautskys and Renners, who have been joined, unfortunately, by Freidrich Adler) and by the bourgeois state apparatus, i.e., the bourgeois officials, the bourgeois judges and the rest. The present "right of assembly" and "freedom of the press" in the German "democratic" (bourgeois democratic) republic are a lie and a sham, because, in fact, they represent freedom for the rich to buy and bribe the press, freedom for the rich to dope the people

with the gin of bourgeois newspaper lies, freedom for the rich to "own" mansions, the best premises, etc.

The dictatorship of the proletariat *deprives* the capitalists of their mansions, of the best premises, of the printing plants, of the stocks of paper, and hands them over to the working people.

That will mean substituting for "popular," "pure" "democracy" "the dictatorship of one class"—howl the Scheidemanns and Kautskys, the Austerlitzes and Renners (in unison with their friends in other countries, the Gomperses, Hendersons, Renaudels, Vanderveldes and Co.).

It is not true, we reply. It will mean substituting the dictatorship of the proletariat for the actual dictatorship of the bourgeoisie (which is hypocritically concealed by the forms of the democratic bourgeois republic). It will mean substituting democracy for the poor for democracy for the rich. It will mean substituting the right of assembly and freedom of the press for the majority of the population—the toilers—for the right of assembly and freedom of the press for the minority—the exploiters. It will mean an enormous world-historical expansion of democracy, its transformation from a lie into a truth, the emancipation of mankind from the fetters of capital, which distorts and curtails all bourgeois democracy, even the most "democratic" and republican. It will mean substituting the *proletarian* state for the bourgeois state, and this is the only thing that can lead to the withering away of the state in general.

Why cannot this end be achieved without the dictatorship of one class? Why is it not possible to pass immediately to "pure" democracy?—ask the hypocritical friends of the bourgeoisie, or the naive kleinbürger and philistines who are fooled by them.

Our reply is: because in any capitalist society only the bourgeoisie or the proletariat can be of decisive significance, while the small proprietors inevitably remain vacillating, impotent and foolish dreamers about "pure," i.e., non-class, or above-class, democracy. Because it is impossible to emerge from a society in which one class oppresses another except by the dictatorship of the oppressed class. Because only the proletariat is able to vanquish the bourgeoisie and overthrow it, for it is the only class that is united and "schooled" by capitalism, and is able to win the following of the vacillating mass of the toilers who live in a petty-bourgeois manner—to win their following, or at all events "neutralise" them. Because only sentimental petty

bourgeois and philistines can dream, and deceive themselves and the workers by these dreams, of throwing off the yoke of capital without a long and difficult period of crushing the resistance of the exploiters. In Germany and Austria this resistance has not yet developed in the open, because the expropriation of the expropriators has not yet begun. This resistance will be desperate and furious when that expropriation begins. By concealing this from themselves and the workers, the Scheidemanns and Kautskys, the Austerlitzes and Renners betray the interests of the proletariat and at the most decisive moment desert the position of the class struggle and the overthrow of the yoke of the bourgeoisie for the position of compromise between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, the position of "social peace," or of reconciling the exploiters and the exploited.

"Revolutions are the locomotives of history," 45 said Marx. Revolution teaches rapidly. The workers in the cities and the agricultural labourers in the rural districts of Germany and Austria will soon understand that the Scheidemanns and the Kautskys, the Austerlitzes and Renners have betrayed the cause of socialism. The proletariat will throw overboard these "social-traitors," these Socialists in word and traitors to socialism in deed, in the same way as the proletariat in Russia threw overboard similar petty bourgeois and philistines, the Mensheviks and "Socialist-Revolutionaries." The proletariat will realise—and all the sooner, the more complete the domination of these "leaders" will be-that only the substitution of a state of the Paris Commune type (about which Marx, who has been misinterpreted and betrayed by the Scheidemanns and Kautskys, said so much), or a state of the Soviet type, for the bourgeois state—even the most democratic of bourgeois republics-can open the road to socialism. The dictatorship of the proletariat will rid mankind of the yoke of capital and of war.

December 23, 1918.

Pravda, No. 2, January 3, 1919.

## NATIONAL ECONOMY

COMRADES, permit me first of all to say a few words about the foreign affairs of the Soviet Republic. Of course, you all know that the main factor in foreign affairs is the victory of Anglo-French-American imperialism and its attempt to seize complete possession of the whole world, and, particularly, to destroy Soviet Russia.

You know that at the beginning of the October Revolution, not only the majority of representatives of the West-European bourgeoisie, but also a certain section of the Russian bourgeoisie believed that what was going on in our country was a sort of socialist experiment which could have no essential and serious significance from a world standpoint. Particularly arrogant and shortsighted representatives of the bourgeoisie frequently expressed themselves to the effect that the Communist experiments in Russia could serve no other purpose than to give satisfaction to German imperialism. And, unfortunately, there were people who allowed themselves to be blinded by such utterances and who, incidentally, regarded the incredibly onerous and coercive terms of the Brest Peace from this angle. As a matter of fact, these people were wittingly or unwittingly fostering a petty-bourgeois class patriotism and regarding the growing unfavourableness of the situation not from the standpoint of its world significance, not from the standpoint of the development of events on a world scale, but from the standpoint that German imperialism is the chief enemy, and that this coercive and unusually extortionate peace was a triumph for the German imperialists.

And, indeed, if we regard the events of that period from the standpoint of the situation in Russia, more ruinous terms can scarcely be imagined. But the folly of the calculations of the German imperialists became apparent within a few months, when the Germans were conquering the Ukraine and bragging to the German bourgeoisie, and still more to the German proletariat, that the moment had arrived to reap the fruits of imperialist policy, and that in the Ukraine they would secure everything Germany needed. That was a very short-sighted and shallow judgment of events.

But it soon became apparent that only those were right who regarded events from the standpoint of their influence on the development of the world revolution. The example of the Ukraine, which had undergone unparalleled sufferings, in fact showed that the only correct judgment of events was one based on a study and careful observation of the international proletarian revolution. Imperialism found itself hard-pressed by the toiling masses, whose condition had become intolerable. And we can now see that the Ukrainian episode was one of the links in the process of growth of the world revolution.

The German imperialists were able to procure from the Ukraine far less material benefits than they had anticipated. On the other hand, this transformation of the war into a patently predatory one demoralised the entire German army, while contact with Soviet Russia started in this army of the labouring masses of Germany the process of disintegration which was to make itself felt a few months later. And now that Anglo-American imperialism has become still more arrogant, and regards itself an overlord whom nobody dare gainsay, we do not close our eyes to the extremely difficult position in which we find ourselves. The Entente powers have now overstepped the bounds of the possible for bourgeois policy; they have overdone it, just as the German imperialists overdid it in February and March 1918 in concluding the Brest Peace. The cause that led to the collapse of German imperialism is again clearly perceptible in the case of Anglo-French imperialism. The latter has imposed peace terms on Germany that are far worse, far more onerous than those which Germany imposed on us when concluding the Brest Peace. In doing so, Anglo-French imperialism has overstepped the bounds and this will later prove fatal to it. Beyond these bounds imperialism forfeits the hope of holding the labouring masses in obedience.

In spite of the uproar raised by the chauvinists in connection with the defeat and destruction of Germany, in spite of the fact that the war is not yet officially over, we already observe in France and Great Britain signs of an extraordinary growth of the working class movement and a change of attitude on the part of the politicians who formerly held the chauvinist standpoint but who are now opposing their governments for their attempt to meddle in Russian affairs. If we add to this the reports that have been recently appearing in the newspapers of the beginnings of fraternisation on the part of the British and American soldiers, if we remember that imperialist armies consist of citizens, who are being held in hand by means of deceit and threats, it may be admitted that Soviet Russia is standing on fairly firm ground. With this general picture of world war and revolution before us, we are absolutely calm, and regard the future with complete confidence. And we assert that Anglo-French imperialism has gone to such extremes that it has overstepped all the bounds of peace practically obtainable by imperialists and is being menaced with complete collapse.

The tasks that the Entente powers—who are continuing the imperialist war—have set themselves are to stifle revolution and to seize and divide up all the countries of the world. But although Great Britain and America have been more exempt from the horrors of war than Germany, and although their democratically organised bourgeoisie is much more far-sighted than the German, the British and American imperialists have lost their heads and are now compelled by conditions outside of their control to undertake a task that is beyond their power; they are compelled to maintain troops for purposes of pacification and subjugation.

Nevertheless, our present situation demands a maximum exertion of effort. And we must still set greater value on a month than we formerly did on a whole decade, because we are now doing a hundred times more: we are not only safeguarding the Russian Republic but are doing a great work for the world proletariat. Intense effort is demanded of us, immense work in compiling a plan of organisation and in defining general relations.

Passing to the question of our immediate tasks, I must say that the main thing has already been accomplished, and that in the interval between the First and Second Congresses of the Councils of National Economy the principal type of work has been outlined. A general plan of administration of industry, of the nationalised enterprises, of administration of whole branches of industry, has been drawn up and placed on a firm basis with the help of the trade unions. And in this connection we shall continue to combat all syndicalist, separatist, parochial and regional tendencies, which can only harm our cause.

The military situation imposes great responsibility and heavy duties on us. Joint management with the participation of the trade unions is essential. Joint bodies are necessary, but joint management must not be allowed to become a hindrance to practical work. And when I personally had occasion to observe the way our economic tasks are being carried out by our enterprises, what struck me particularly was that the executive part of our work, associated as it is with collective discussion, at times impedes the accomplishment of these tasks. This transition from corporate performance to personal responsibility is the urgent problem of the day.

We shall unreservedly demand of all the Councils of National Economy, Chief Committees and Central Administrations that the joint system of management shall not be reduced to empty discussion, to the writing of resolutions, to the compilation of plans and to regional patriotism. That would be intolerable. We shall insistently demand that every member of the Councils of National Economy and every member of a Chief Committee shall know for which branch of business, in a narrow sense, he is responsible. When we receive reports that raw material is available, but people do not know, cannot determine how much, when we hear outcries to the effect that warehouses filled with goods are under lock and key while the peasants are demanding, and justly demanding, commodity exchange, and are refusing to surrender grain in exchange for devaluated paper, we must know what member of what particular joint board is engaging in red tape; and we must say that this member is responsible for the red tape and will be made to answer for it from the standpoint of national defence, i.e., he will be liable to immediate arrest and court martial, even though he be a representative of the most important union in the most important Chief Committee. That person must be made to answer for the practical performance of the most simple and elementary things, such as keeping account of goods in the warehouses and putting them to proper use. It is in the performance of such elementary duties that obstructions most frequently arise.

From the historical standpoint, this should not evoke any misgivings, because in the development of new and hitherto unwitnessed forms a certain amount of time has to be spent in outlining the general plan of organisation, which then is developed in the actual process of work. On the contrary, it is astonishing how much has been done in this field in so short a time. But from the military standpoint, from the socialist standpoint, when the proletariat is demanding the maximum energy on our part in order that there may be bread and warm

coats, that the workers should not be deprived of footwear, foodstuffs, and so forth, the exchange of commodities must be increased to three times and ten times as much as at present. This side of the matter must be made the immediate task of the Councils of National Economy.

What we require is practical work by people who will be responsible for the tasks of exchanging grain for goods, to see that grain is not lying about unutilised; who will be responsible not only for proper account being kept of the raw materials in every warehouse, but also that they do not lie about unutilised, and for real assistance being given in the sphere of production.

As to the cooperatives, they also must be approached in a business-like way. When I hear members of Councils of National Economy asserting that the cooperative societies are a matter for shopkeepers, that they are filled with Mensheviks, with White Guards, and that we must therefore keep them at arm's length, I maintain that these people display complete ignorance of the matter. They absolutely fail to understand the tasks of the moment when, instead of referring to the good cooperators as experts, they refer to them as people who are stretching out a hand to the White Guards. I assert that they are not minding their own business: we have the Extraordinary Commissions for ferreting out White Guards, and that business should be left to them. But the cooperatives are the only apparatus created by capitalist society which we must utilise. And we shall therefore ruthlessly punish under military law every attempt to replace action by arguments that are the embodiment of short-sightedness, gross stupidity and intellectual conceit.

When to this day, after the lapse of a year, matters are not organised as they should be; when, confronted by practical problems we still continue to discuss plans, while the country is demanding bread, felt boots and the distribution of raw materials in proper time, such red tape and meddling in other people's affairs are not to be tolerated.

There are sometimes elements in our apparatus who incline towards the White Guard; but given Communist control in all our institutions these people cannot acquire political significance or leading positions. There cannot be the slightest doubt on this score. But we need them as practical workers, and there is no need to fear them. I have no doubt that the Communists are splendid people, that there are splendid organisers among them; but years and years will be required to obtain such organisers in large number, and we cannot wait.

But we can now obtain these workers from among the bourgeoisie, from among the experts and intellectuals. And we shall demand of all comrades working in the Councils of National Economy: what, sirs, have you done to enlist experienced people in the work; what have you done to secure experts, salesmen, efficient bourgeois cooperators, who must work for you in no worse a manner than they worked for the Kolupayevs and Razuvayevs? \* It is time to abandon the old prejudices, and to enlist all the experts we need in our work. Every joint body, every Communist executive must know this. In such an attitude lies the pledge of success.

Enough of idle talk! The time has come for practical work, in order to extricate our country from the ring in which the imperialists have surrounded it. That must be the position of every Soviet and cooperative organisation. We need action and action! If, having taken over power, the proletariat is unable to utilise that power, is unable to put the problem practically and solve it practically, it will forfeit much. It is time to abandon the prejudice that only Communists, among whom there are unquestionably excellent people, can perform a particular job. It is time to abandon this prejudice; we need workers who know their job, and we must enlist them all in the work.

Capitalism has left us a valuable legacy in the shape of its big experts. And we must be sure to utilise them, utilise them on a broad and mass scale; we must put every one of them to work. We have no time to spend on training experts from among our Communists, because everything now depends on practical work and practical results.

We must demand that every member of a joint body, every member of a responsible institution takes charge of a job and be fully responsible for it. It is absolutely essential that everyone who takes charge of a definite branch of work should be responsible for everything, both for production and distribution. I must tell you that the situation of our Soviet Republic is such that given proper distribution of bread and other products we can hold on for a very, very long time. But this imperatively demands a proper policy of definitely abandoning all red tape. We must act swiftly and with decision, we must appoint definite people for definite responsible work; every one of these people must definitely know his job, must definitely answer

<sup>\*</sup> Characters used by Saltykov-Shchedrin, the Russian satirist of the nineteenth century, to depict the growing rural and urban bourgeoisie of that period in Russia.—Ed.

for it, answer for it even with his head. That is the policy we are pursuing in the Council of People's Commissars and in the Council of Defence; and to this policy all the activities of the Councils of National Economy and the cooperatives must be subordinated. That is the path the policy of the proletariat must take.

We must see to it that the wheels of commodity exchange revolve properly. That is the whole problem just now. An enormous amount of work has to be done in this sphere, and, in conclusion, my emphatic appeal to all of you is to do your share of this work.

Speech at the Second All-Russian Congress of Councils of National Economy, December 25, 1918.

Pravda, No. 283, December 27, 1918.

### HEROISM OF THE PRESNYA WORKERS

THIRTEEN years ago the proletarians of Moscow raised the standard of revolt against tsardom. This was the culminating point in the development of the first workers' revolution against tsardom. The workers suffered defeat, and Presnya ran with workers' blood.

The unforgettable heroism of the Moscow workers set an example of militancy to the masses of the working people throughout Russia. But these masses were then too ignorant, too disunited, and failed to back the heroes of Presnya and Moscow who rose in arms against the tsarist, landlord monarchy.

The defeat of the Moscow workers was followed by the defeat of the first revolution as a whole. For twelve long and painful years the savage landlord reaction tortured all the workers and peasants of all the nationalities of Russia.

The heroism of the Presnya workers was not in vain. Their sacrifices bore fruit. The first breach was made in the tsarist monarchy; the breach was slowly but surely widened, weakening the obsolete, mediæval regime. The heroism of the Moscow workers started a deep ferment among the masses of the working people in town and country, the effects of which never died down, in spite of all persecution.

Before the armed insurrection of December 1905, the people of Russia were incapable of waging a mass armed struggle against their exploiters. After December they were no longer the same people. They had been reborn. They had received their baptism of fire. They had been steeled in revolt. They trained the ranks of the warriors who were victorious in 1917 and who now, in spite of incredible difficulties, are overcoming the torments of hunger and devastation caused by the imperialist war and are fighting for the world victory of socialism.

Long live the workers of Red Presnya, the vanguard of the world workers' revolution!

## **COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES**

INFORMATION to hand shows that, in defiance of the decree of November 21, cooperative societies are being nationalised, or closed down and their goods requisitioned, and are not receiving assistance in resuming their lawful functions. All who interfere with supply help to disrupt the rear of the Soviet Republic. It is hereby ordered that all attempts to violate or evade the decree of November 21 shall be put a stop to immediately, the cooperative societies that have been closed down or nationalised shall be restored, their goods returned to them, and the cooperatives unconditionally included in the distributing organisation on an equal footing with Soviet shops. The fullest use should be made of the cooperative machinery in the procurement and distribution of goods, and representatives of the cooperative societies should be invited to sit on the cooperative commissions of the food bodies. Violations and evasions of the decree will be punished. The contents of this telegram are to be communicated to all executive committees and food bodies of the Northern Region for their information and for execution and published in the local press.

Ulyanov (Lenin)
Chairman of the Council of Defence

Telegram to the Council of Communes of the Northern Region.

Petrogradskaya Pravda, No. 285 (510), December 27, 1918.

# TO THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF. AT THE FRONT

THE Council of Defence wants to know: (1) Is it true that in the fighting in the Balashov district a couple of weeks ago our troops surrendered twenty-five or thirty guns to the enemy in the course of two or three days, and, if so, what have you done to bring those responsible to account and to prevent a repetition of such occurrences? (2) Is it true that a fortnight ago you issued orders for the capture of Orenburg, and, if so, why have your orders not been carried out? (3) What has been done to strengthen the position of our troops in the Perm district, which are requesting urgent assistance from the centre?

The Council of Defence awaits your reply to these questions.

V. Ulyanov (Lenin)
Chairman of the Council of Defence

Telephone message, December 1918.

First published in Izvestia, No. 44, February 23, 1927.

# A LITTLE PICTURE ILLUSTRATING A BIG PROBLEM

COMRADE Sosnovsky, editor of Bednota [The Poor Peasant], \* has brought me a remarkable book. It should be brought to the knowledge of as many workers and peasants as possible. Most valuable lessons, splendidly illustrated by living examples on some of the most important problems of socialist construction, are to be drawn from it. This book, written by Comrade Alexander Todorsky, is called A Year With Rifle and Plough and was published in the town of Vesyegonsk by the local district executive committee on the occasion of the anniversary of the October Revolution.

The author describes the year's experience of the men in charge of building up the Soviet power in the Vesyegonsk district-first, in the civil war, the revolt of the local kulaks and its suppression, and then in "peaceful constructive life." The author has succeeded in giving so simple, and at the same time so lively, an account of the course of the revolution in this rural backwoods that to attempt to give a summary of it would only weaken its effect. This book should be disseminated as widely as possible, and it is greatly to be desired that many more of those who are working among the masses and with the masses, in the very thick of real life, sit down to describe their experiences. The publication of several hundred, or even several dozen, of these descriptions, the best, most truthfully and plainly told and containing the largest number of valuable facts, would be infinitely more useful to the cause of socialism than many of the newspaper and magazine articles and books of professional journalists who only too often cannot see the real life behind the paper they write on.

Let me give a small example from Comrade A. Todorsky's narrative. It was suggested that "merchant hands" should not be allowed to

<sup>\*</sup>Daily paper of the Russian Communist Party which carried on educational activity in the rural districts from 1918 to 1931.—Ed.

go "unemployed," and that they should be made to "get down to work."

"... With this purpose in view, three young, energetic and very business-like manufacturers, E. Efremov, A. Loginov and N. Kozlov, were summoned to the Executive Committee and ordered on pain of imprisonment and confiscation of property to set up a sawmill and tannery. The work was started immediately.

"The Soviet authorities were not mistaken in their choice of men, and the manufacturers, be it said to their honour, were among the first to realise that they were not dealing with "casual and transitory guests," but with real masters who had taken the power firmly into their hands.

"Having quite rightly realised this, they energetically set to work to carry out the orders of the Executive Committee, with the result that Vesyegonsk now has a sawmill going at full speed, covering the needs of the local population and filling orders for a new railway under construction.

"As to the tannery, the premises are now ready, and the engine, drums and other machinery obtained from Moscow are being installed, so that in a month and a half, or two at most, Vesyegonsk will be getting chrome leather of its own manufacture.

"The fitting up of two Soviet plants by 'non-Soviet' hands is a good example of how to fight a class which is hostile to us.

"To rap the exploiters over the knuckles, to render them harmless or 'finish them off,' is only half the job. The whole job will be done only when we compel them to work, and with the fruits of their labour help to improve the new life and strengthen the Soviet power."

These fine and thoroughly true words should be carved in stone and prominently displayed in every Council of National Economy, food body, factory, land department and so on. For what has been understood by our comrades in remote Vesyegonsk is all too often stubbornly ignored by Soviet workers in the capitals. It is no rare thing to meet a Soviet intellectual or worker, a Communist, who sniffs contemptuously at the mere mention of cooperative societies and proclaims with an air of profound importance—and with equally profound stupidity—that these are not Soviet hands, but bourgeois, shopkeepers, Mensheviks, that at such and such a place and time the cooperators had, by their financial manipulations, concealed aid given to White Guards, and that in our socialist republic the machinery of supply and distribution must be built up only by clean Soviet hands. Such arguments are typical for the fact that in them truth is so

mingled with falsehood as to present a most dangerous distortion of the aims of communism, and is liable to do incalculable harm to our cause.

Yes, the cooperatives are an apparatus of bourgeois society, an apparatus which grew up in a "shopkeeping" atmosphere, which has trained its leaders in the spirit of bourgeois politics and in a bourgeois outlook, and has therefore produced a large proportion of White Guards or accomplices of the White Guards. That is undeniable. But it is a bad thing when from undeniable truths, by over-simplification and slap-dash application, absurd conclusions are drawn. We can only build communism from the materials created by capitalism, from that cultural apparatus which has been reared under bourgeois conditions and—as far as the human material, as part of the cultural apparatus, is concerned—is therefore inevitably imbued with the bourgeois mentality. That is the difficulty of building communist society, but it is also a guarantee that it can be built, and will be built. In fact, what distinguishes Marxism from the old, utopian socialism is that the latter wanted to build the new society not from the mass human material produced by bloodstained, sordid, rapacious, shopkeeping capitalism, but from a special species of virtuous men and women reared in special hothouses and cucumber frames. This absurd idea is now seen to be absurd by everybody, and has been abandoned by everybody, but not everybody is willing or able to ponder over the converse teaching of Marxism and to think out how communism can (and should) be built from the mass human material, which has been corrupted by hundreds and thousands of years of slavery, serfdom, capitalism, small individual enterprise, and the war of every man against his neighbour for a place in the market, for a higher price for his product or his labour.

The cooperative societies are a bourgeois apparatus. From this it follows that it does not deserve to be trusted politically; but it does not allow that we may turn our backs on the task of utilising it for purposes of administration and construction. Political distrust means that we must not place non-Soviet people in politically responsible posts. It means that the Extraordinary Commissions must keep a sharp eye on the representatives of classes, strata or groups that have leanings towards the White Guards. (Though, be it said in parenthesis, one need not go to the absurd lengths that Comrade Latsis, one of our finest and tried and tested Communists, went to in his

Kazan magazine, Krasny Terror, [Red Terror],\* when he wanted to say that Red terror meant the forcible suppression of exploiters who attempt to restore their rule, but said instead [on page 2 of the first issue of his magazine]: "Do not search [!!?] in the records for evidence to show whether his revolt against the Soviet was an armed or only a verbal one.")

Political distrust of the representatives of a bourgeois apparatus is legitimate and essential. But to refuse to utilise them in the work of administration and construction would be the height of folly, fraught with untold harm to communism. If anybody attempted to recommend a Menshevik as a Socialist, or as a political leader, or even as a political adviser, he would be committing a colossal mistake, for the history of the revolution in Russia has definitely shown that the Mensheviks (and the Socialist-Revolutionaries) are not Socialists, but petty-bourgeois democrats who are capable of siding with the bourgeoisie every time the class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie becomes particularly acute. But the petty-bourgeois democracy is not a chance political formation, not an exception, but a necessary product of capitalism; and it is not only the old, pre-capitalistic, economically reactionary middle peasantry that are the "purveyors" of this democracy; so are the capitalistically cultured cooperative societies, intelligentsia, etc., which have sprung from the soil of large-scale capitalism. Why, even backward Russia produced, side by side with the Kolupayevs and Razuvayevs, capitalists who knew how to utilise the services of the cultured intelligentsia-Menshevik, Socialist-Revolutionary and non-party. Are we to show that we are more stupid than these capitalists and fail to utilise such "building material" in the construction of a communist Russia?

Written at the end of 1918 or beginning of 1919.

Pravda No. 258, November 12, 1925.

<sup>•</sup> A weekly published in 1918 in Kazan by the Extraordinary Commission to Combat Counter Revolution on the Czechoslovak Front.—Ed.

## THE FOOD SITUATION

COMRADES, allow me to begin by briefly mentioning the chief facts relating to our food policy. I think that these brief remarks will be useful not only in enabling us to form a correct judgment of the significance of the resolution we are recommending today for adoption by the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, but also in enabling us to form an opinion of our whole food policy in general, and of the role which now, when a difficult turn of affairs is at hand, falls to the lot of the representatives of the organised proletariat—that vanguard and chief buttress of Soviet Russia and of the socialist revolution.

Our food policy has been marked by three major acts, which, taken chronologically, are as follows: first—the decision to form Committees of Poor Peasants, a step which constitutes the very foundation of our food policy and which, moreover, was a turning point of tremendous import in the whole course of development and structure of our revolution. By taking this step we crossed the boundary which divides the bourgeois revolution from the socialist revolution; for, the victory of the working class in the cities and the transfer of all the factories to the proletarian state, by themselves, would not be enough to create and consolidate the foundation of a socialist system, if we did not also create for ourselves in the countryside, not a general peasant, but a really proletarian buttress. In October, we were obliged to confine ourselves to uniting the proletariat with the peasantry in general, as a whole; and thanks to this alliance we were able rapidly to destroy landlordism and sweep it from the face of the earth. But it was only when we proceeded to organise the poor peasantry, the peasant proletariat and semi-proletariat that a durable alliance could be formed between the masses of the labouring proletariat of the city and the proletariat of the country. Only then could the war against

the kulaks and the peasant bourgeoisie be fought in real earnest. This radical step continues to be the keystone of our food policy.

The second step, a less important one, perhaps, was the decree passed with the participation and on the initiative of our representatives, the decree on utilising the cooperative societies. There we laid it down that we must make use of the machinery which was created by the cooperative societies and by capitalist society in general, and which, for obvious reasons, was weaker in Russia than in the West-European countries. In this respect we were guilty of many sins of commission and omission, in the towns and big proletarian centres, as well as in the countryside. Here we are up against miscomprehension, misunderstanding, prejudice and traditions which tend to repel us from the cooperative societies. It is quite natural that there should be many non-proletarian elements among the upper ranks of the cooperative movement. We must wage a struggle against these people, who are capable of swinging over to the side of the bourgeoisie; against counter-revolutionary elements and their proclivities; but at the same time we must preserve this machinery, the cooperative machinerywhich is likewise a heritage from capitalism—this machinery of distribution among millions of people, without which we cannot build socialism with any success. In this respect the Food Commissariat has outlined a correct policy, but we have not yet put it fully into effect. The proposals we are submitting today to the All-Russian Central Executive Committee on behalf of the Communist group which insistently demand that the cooperative machinery be utilised are one more step in the same direction. We must know how to combat the undesirable upper element in the cooperative machinery—we have forces and authority enough for that, for it would be absurd to think that they can put up any serious resistance—we must know how to carry on this fight; but we must utilise the cooperative machinery without fail, so as not to squander our forces, so that this machine may be united, and so that the Communists may devote their energies not only to political, but also to organisational work, and make technical use of the machinery which stands ready for this workthe cooperative machinery.

The third step in our food policy is the formation of workers' food organisations. Here, an important task confronts you, the food workers. The path we have entered on is the right path for us to follow, and we must see to it that it is followed by all the commissariats. It is a

measure not only of importance in the matter of food supply, but is also of general social and class importance. In order that the socialist revolution may be enduring, a new class must undertake the work of government. We know that prior to 1861 it was the serf owners and landlords who were the power that governed Russia. We know that since then, generally speaking, the power that governed was the bourgeoisie, the representatives of the wealthy strata. The durability of the socialist revolution will depend on how far we are able to elevate the new class, the proletariat, to the work of government, to have Russia governed by the proletariat, to make this work of government a step towards the universal training of the working people in the art of governing the state, a training not derived from books and newspapers, from speeches and pamphlets, but from practice, enabling every one to test his ability in this work.

That is the chief stage in our food policy, which at the same time is indicative of the whole character and structure of our food policy. I must say that very onerous duties here confront our comrades in the food supply. It need scarcely be said that there is no more cruel and dreadful calamity than famine, that the masses are naturally driven to impatience, anger and indignation by every abnormality in this sphere, for it is a calamity that cannot be borne. Nor need it be said that the task which falls on the shoulders of the Food Commissariat is a most difficult one. You know, and the comrades from the trade unions know it particularly, how much chaos and disorder there is in the management of the big factories, in the keeping stock of their output. Yet this is a thousand times easier than to keep stock of food which is gathered in by millions of peasants. But we have no other alternative. There is a general food shortage in the country. There is not enough to feed everybody.

What do we mean when we say that certain foodstuffs are scarce? It means that if we were now to distribute them among the whole population, if every peasant were to turn over his total produce, if everybody were to reduce his consumption somewhat below the standard of sufficiency—because there is not enough for a full standard all round—if every peasant were voluntarily to agree to reduce his consumption somewhat below the standard of sufficiency and to turn over all the rest to the state, and if we distributed it all properly, we could manage to carry on without starvation, although on reduced rations. But, obviously, if we set ourselves this aim, to carry it out

amidst the present state of economic disruption and with our nationwide inefficiency—this efficiency is only just being built up; we had nowhere to get it from before—to accomplish this aim by ordinary means is obviously impossible. If there is a shortage of food, it means ... what does it mean? It means that if you were to sanction freedom of trade when there is a shortage of foodstuffs essential to the life of the population, the result would be frantic profiteering and prices would be inflated to what is called monopoly or famine prices, and only a small upper stratum, with incomes considerably above the average, would be able to satisfy their needs at these fantastic prices, while the vast majority of the people would starve. That is what it means when there is a shortage of foodstuffs in the country, when the country is in a state of famine. And ever since the imperialists began to march on Russia, she has been surrounded. They cannot come out openly with their predatory plans; but that does not mean the end of their intervention, as Comrade Kamenev rightly remarked. We are a besieged country, a besieged fortress. In this besieged fortress want is inevitable. And therefore the task of the Food Commissariat is the most difficult organisational task of all the commissariats.

Our enemy today, if we take the internal enemy, is not so much the capitalist and the landlord—this exploiting minority was easy to vanquish, and it has been vanquished. Our enemy is the profiteer and the bureaucrat—the profiteer that every peasant is by inclination who has the opportunity of making a good thing out of the desperate want and agonising famine in the cities and in some of the villages. And you know very well, especially the comrades from the trade unions, that the urge, the tendency to go in for profiteering is to be observed in the industrial centres, too, when certain goods are not to be had, or are scarce, and that everybody who manages to lay his hands on them tries to hoard and make a profit out of them. If we were to allow freedom of trade, prices would at once be inflated to fantastic levels, levels beyond the reach of the vast majority of the population.

That is the situation, and that is why among the undeveloped masses, exhausted as they are and worn out by starvation and suffering, there is a tendency, or an und fined feeling of indignation, of anger against the comrades engaged on food work. They are all people who cannot think or see beyond their noses, and it seems to them that food could be procured. They have heard that there is food in some place

or other, that somebody went there and got some—but as to calculating on a large scale, whether there is enough for ten million people, and how much is required for such a number, of that they are incapable. It seems to them that they are being interfered with, that our food comrades are putting obstacles in their way. They do not understand that the food workers are acting like wise and thrifty managers, saying that if we observe the utmost stringency and the utmost organisation, we shall at best—at best—be able to maintain a standard that will, it is true, fall short of sufficiency, but will not sink to the level of starvation. Such is the situation of the country, for we have been cut off from the most important centres of food supply—Siberia and the Donetz region; we have been cut off from fuel and raw material, from food for men and food for industry, without which the country is forced to suffer the most desperate agonies.

The food workers are acting like wise managers. They say we must stick together, for only then shall we be able to keep going; we must take systematic action against all attempts of individuals acting for themselves only, willing to pay any price, to fill their own belly, and not give a hang for anything else. We must not think and act individually, each for himself, for that spells ruin; we must combat such tendencies, such habits, which have been fostered in all of us, in the millions of working people, by capitalist private enterprise, by the system of working for the market:-"I shall sell and make my bit; the more I make the less I shall starve, and the more others will." That is the accursed heritage of private property, which left the masses to starve even when there was food enough in the country, when a paltry minority waxed rich both on wealth and on poverty, while the people lived in want and perished in the war. That is the position with regard to our food policy. That is the economic law which says that when there is a food shortage, frantic profiteering is engendered by every step towards what is called freedom of trade. That is why all the talk on this subject, all the attempts to substantiate it, are utterly pernicious and represent a retreat, a step back from that socialist constructive work which the Food Commissariat is doing amidst incredible difficulties in a fight against millions of profiteers, whom we have inherited from capitalism and the old petty-bourgeois. private-property maxim: "Every man for himself, and the devil take the hindmost." If we cannot root out this maxim, we shall never build socialism.

#### ARTICLES AND SPEECHES

Only unity, only the closest alliance, achieved in everyday life, in everyday work, where it is hardest of all to achieve—in the job of dividing up a crust of bread when bread is short—only given that can we really build socialism. We know that this cannot be accomplished in a single year, that people who have suffered so long from hunger are frightfully impatient and demand that at least from time to time we retreat from this only correct food policy. And we do have to retreat from it now and again; but from our policy as a whole we will not retreat or depart.

That was the position six months ago, when the food crisis had reached its climax, when we had no stocks at all, when the victories of the Czechoslovaks had robbed us of the greater part of the Volga Region. We were obliged to consent to the pood and a half. <sup>46</sup> This measure cost us a big fight, a sharp fight—the position of both sides was very bad.

The food workers said: "Yes, the position is bad, but we must not make it worse. By giving relief to a few for a week, you will be making things worse for the millions." On the other hand, it was said: "You are demanding ideal organisation of people who are exhausted and racked by hunger; you are demanding the impossible; you must allow some relief, even if it spoils the general policy for a while. This measure will cause a new accession of courage, and that is the main thing." That was the plight we were in when we proposed the pood and a half idea. We have the general, fundamental, radical line; but when the position became unbearable, we had to retreat from it in order to afford at least some temporary relief and to preserve the courage and morale of the people.

A similar situation is arising now, when we are on the border line, when six comparatively easy months are behind us and six hard months are about to begin. To make this clear, let me tell you that during the first half of 1918 the Commissariat of Food procured 28,000,000 poods, and during the second half 67,500,000 poods, that is, two and a half times as much. You will thus clearly see that the first half year is one of particularly dire and acute want, whereas the second half-year, owing to the harvest, offers an opportunity of improvement. Now, in 1919, the success of our food organisations, thanks chiefly to the Committees of Poor Peasants in the countryside and the institute of workers' food inspectors in the towns, is immense and has enabled us to procure two and a half times as much food. But the success of the

#### THE FOOD SITUATION

first year of our work, when a new edifice had to be built and new methods tested, was not and could not be enough to ensure us supplies for the whole year, although it afforded us a respite for half a year. That respite is coming to an end, and a new half-year is beginning, the most difficult, the hardest of all. We must bring all our resources into play to help the workers, to secure them a short respite, to improve their condition in every way we can. And it is only natural that the Presidium of the Moscow Soviet and its chairman, Kamenev, should have been so insistent that we lay down our policy as clearly as possible and make a clear-cut division between monopoly and non-monopoly foodstuffs, which would enable us to attain certain results, if only for a time, so that the workers in the towns and the non-agricultural areas might experience at least some slight relief and feel a new accession of courage and energy. These are particularly necessary just now, when we are on the eve of this difficult half-year, but when there are signs that the forces in the camp of the imperialists and their attacks on us are weakening.

Comrade Kamenev, it is true, has mentioned not only signs but facts to show that, in spite of the severe trials and reverses we have suffered at Perm, the Red Army is being built on a firm foundation, that it can win and will win. But the present half-year will be a most difficult one, and from the very outset, we must therefore do whatever is necessary and possible to alleviate the situation and lay down a clear food policy. That is our most urgent task. There was a conflict over the pood and a half among the Communists themselves, and it sometimes assumed acute forms. But it has not weakened us; rather, it has led us to examine our policy in an even more critical and cautious way. There may be mutual attacks, but we are arriving at a decision which is being adopted rapidly and unanimously, and which, at this difficult juncture, when we are beginning a new and trying half-year, demands that we once more make it clear to ourselves why a situation has arisen which compels us once more to muster all our strength and strain every nerve.

We have been through an exceptionally hard year, and we are now on the threshold of an even harder one. But every half year since the German revolution and since the ferment has begun in England and France brings us nearer to the victory not only of the Russian revolution, but of the world revolution as well. That is the situation as it now stands. We have decided to present a resolution laying down

the fundamental principles of food policy, which we will request the All-Russian Central Executive Committee [A.R.C.E.C.] to pass, so that it may be immediately embodied by the food workers in appropriate decrees that will enable us, the representatives of the centre, the workers of the towns and the non-agricultural areas, to multiply our efforts once more. For in our efforts alone lies the pledge that we will win, that, though we make certain temporary concessions, rendered essential by fatigue and famine, we shall uphold the fundamental principles of our Communist food policy and preserve them intact until the time comes when the victory of communism will be complete and worldwide. I shall now read, clause by clause, the motion which the Communist group of the A.R.C.E.C. submits to the All-Russian Executive Committee:

"This joint session of the A.R.C.E.C., the All-Russian Trade Union Congress, the Moscow Soviet, and representatives of factory committees and trade unions of the city of Moscow hereby lays down the following fundamental principles of food policy and instructs the People's Commissariat of Food to draw up forthwith decrees embodying these principles.

- "I. The Soviet food policy is hereby confirmed as correct and unassailable, this policy consisting in: (a) registration and state distribution on the class principle; (b) monopoly of the principal foodstuffs, and (c) transfer of the business of supply from private hands to the hands of the state.
- "2. Unless the state monopoly of the chief items of food (bread, sugar, tea and salt) already decreed is strictly enforced, and unless mass procurements of other of the more important foodstuffs (meat, sea fish, hemp, sunflower-seed and linseed oil, animal fats, excepting butter, and potatoes) are made by the state at fixed prices, it will be impossible to insure a regular supply of food to the population under present conditions. Furthermore, such mass procurements at fixed prices are only a preliminary measure, in preparation for a state monopoly of these foodstuffs, too, which it shall be the next task of the Commissariat of Food to introduce:

"The procurement and transportation of all foodstuffs enumerated in this clause, with the exception of potatoes, are forbidden to all but the state food bodies. The right to mass procurement of potatoes at the established fixed prices shall, in addition to state bodies, be granted also to workers' organisations and trade unions and cooperative societies."

Then comes the third clause, which states that:

"3. As a temporary measure, workers' organisations and cooperative societies shall be granted the right to procure all foodstuffs other than those enumerated in clause 2.

"4. The local food bodies are hereby compelled to assist the food-procuring organisations in the exercise of this right. The transportation and marketing of these foodstuffs shall be absolutely unrestricted. No pickets, cordons, guards, etc., shall have the right to prevent the unrestricted transportation and sale of the said foodstuffs in bazaars or markets, from carts, etc.

From the standpoint of old customs and the old idea of government, the use of this word "compelled" to carry out the decree may surprise you. You may perhays say: "Can things be so bad in the Soviet Republic that people have to be compelled to obey the will of the A.R.C.E.C.?" Yes, we have to compel, and it is better to say so frankly than to hide our heads in the sand and pretend that everything is going splendidly. Just let our comrades, the representatives of the A.R.C.E.C. and the delegates at the All-Russian Trade Union Congress, recall what they say among themselves, recall whether they are properly carrying out everything that was decreed long ago relative to the proper registration of foodstuffs and the full delivery to the state of those foodstuffs which cannot be left for commodity exchange purposes, although when there are no commodities for exchange the peasants say: "No, you'll get nothing from us for your Kerensky money." Well, if you recall what you say in private among yourselves and bear in mind how many of the orders of the central authorities remain unfulfilled, you will agree and admit that it is better to tell the truth and say that our local bodies have to be compelled, firmly and ruthlessly. At this meeting, in which the A.R.C.E.C., as our supreme body, has come together with the bodies of the All-Russian Trade Union Congress, which have the most numerous representation —and that just now is the main thing—these most influential comrades must firmly say, and make it known in their localities, that the local bodies must get accustomed to the idea that we have to compel them to carry out the policy of the centre consistently. That is very difficult, and it is natural that many millions of people who are accustomed to looking on the central authority as robbers, landlords, exploiters, can have no trust in the centre. But this distrust must be overcome; unless it is, socialism cannot be built; for that means building a centralised economic system, an economic system directed from a centre, and that can only be done by the proletariat, which has been trained in this spirit by the factory and by its whole mode of life. Only the proletariat can do this. The fight against petty localism,

against the habits of the property owner, is a difficult one. We know that this cannot be done all at once; but we shall never tire of urging the representatives of the proletariat to reiterate this truth and put it into practice, for socialism cannot be built otherwise.

This point is particularly important. Comrade Kamenev has mentioned many things here which, naturally, in the haste of our work, we have not carried out; for our food and other commissariats have to issue one order on top of another, with the result that our local bodies find it very difficult to get them all straight. We are accused of issuing decrees too hastily; but what are we to do when we have to make haste because of the onmarch of imperialism, when we are compelled to make haste by the strongest scourge imaginable—the lack of bread and fuel. This being so, we must use every means to explain our tasks, to explain particular mistakes, and that is why the clear and precise demarcation now achieved by this struggle is so important. To achieve this on a far larger scale, we must now make sure that the local bodies do not act as if they are a law unto themselves, that they do not dare to plead that they remembered yesterday's decree but forgot today's, that they knew quite clearly and definitely which foodstuffs are a state monopoly and which are open to unrestricted transportation and sale—that is, everything except what is specifically enumerated in clauses 1 and 2. Let this be made generally known; let those who are now about to return home convey it to the localities; let them do what their official position requires of them; let them take along with them copies of the decrees that will be drawn up on the subject, so that these may be implicitly obeyed and carried out in the localities, so that the orders of the centre may really be carried out, and the indecision which was formerly to be observed may cease.

Further, the end of clause 4 reads:

"N.B. With respect to eggs and butter, this decision shall apply only to districts where mass procurements of eggs and butter are not made by the Commissariat of Food."

I will read only the remaining clauses of the decree. As I am unable to expatiate on them at length, and as there is no need to do so, since several other comrades, some of them better qualified than myself, will speak after me, I shall only stress what I consider most important. I shall read only the basic principles which we recommend the

A.R.C.E.C. to adopt and instruct the Council of People's Commissars and all other authorities of the Soviet Republic to embody in decrees and carry out unreservedly and implicitly:

"5. With a view to increasing procurements, and to the more efficient performance of individual tasks, the principle of quota assignment and procurement shall be extended to non-monopoly foodstuffs, and a bonus system introduced for cooperative and other organisations engaged in procuring both monopoly and non-monopoly produce for the state.

"Organising measures for introducing fresh forces into the food bodies and for the wider participation of workers: (a) The institute of workers' food inspectors shall be widely utilised and its functions extended to include control over the way the decrees of December 10 are observed by the food bodies, and over the procurement of non-monopoly foodstuffs; (b) Workers' inspection shall be introduced at the earliest possible date in all food bodies in the localities and extended to the departments of the Commissariat of Food, with the object of vigorously combating bureaucracy and red tape; (c) Connections with the workers' organisations—trade unions and workers' cooperative societies—shall be strengthened by reinforcing the local bodies with active members of the aforesaid organisations; (d) A system of workers' apprenticeship shall be introduced in all central and local bodies and institutions in order to train from among the ranks of the workers practical experts in food affairs able to fill responsible posts.

"6. The machinery of the cooperatives shall be employed to the full in the work of procurement and distribution. Responsible representatives of the state supply bodies shall be appointed to the cooperative societies to control the activities of the cooperative organisations and coordinate them with the food policy of the government."

That, incidentally, is one of the ways of fighting the upper elements in the cooperative organisations. But it would be a great mistake and positively fatal to scorn the entire cooperative machine, to reject it haughtily or in a spirit of false pride and say: "We shall build ourselves a new one; this is no business of yours, this is something for Communists only." We must make use of the machinery ready at hand—we cannot build socialism unless we utilise what capitalism has left us. We must utilise everything in the way of cultural values capitalism created against our interests. Therein lies the difficulty of socialism, that it has to be built of materials made by our adversaries; but therein lies the only possibility of socialism. We all know this theoretically, and now that we have passed through this year, we have seen practically that socialism can only be built from what capitalism has

created against our interests, and that we must employ all this to build socialism and to consolidate it.

Clause 7 reads:

"7. Supervision to insure the proper observance of the regulations governing the transportation of foodstuffs and the strict enforcement of the monopolies shall devolve on the workers, aided by armed detachments formed by the Commissariat of Food.

"All food pickets other than the detachments of the Commissariat of Food and the Provincial Food Committees, shall be withdrawn immediately. The detachments of the Commissariat of Food and of the Provincial Food Committees shall be withdrawn as and when organs of the institute of workers' inspectors are formed in the respective localities."

My time has elapsed, and I shall only point out that here, in these last clauses, we find the main principles that constitute the underlying spirit of our food policy and of our Soviet policy in general. I have already said that hard times have come, that a more drastic half-year has begun, that the respite in the matter of food supply has ended and a most difficult period has commenced. Every time the Soviet government encounters difficulties in the extraordinarily difficult job of building socialism, it knows of only one way to overcome them, and that is to turn to the workers, to wider and wider sections of the workers every time. I have already said that socialism can be built only when masses of ten times and a hundred times as large begin to build the state and the new economic life themselves. Our food workers have, as their reports show, already got to a stage when no less than one-third of the members of the district food committees are workers. chiefly workers from Petrograd, Moscow and Ivanovo-Voznesenskthe flower of our proletarian army. That is good, but it is not enough. What we need is two-thirds, and we must go on working for it. You know that the advanced sections of the workers have already set about the work of governing the state, the work of building a new life. We know that we must reach down deeper and more boldly enlist new sections. They still lack training, they will inevitably make mistakes, but we are not afraid of that. We know that every mistake they make in state affairs will help to form the new forces, every mistake will be recompensed a hundred-fold by securing us scores of younger and fresher workers. There is no other source we can draw on. We must march forward all the time, take our young forces from wherever

we can and place the representatives of the proletariat in posts of ever increasing responsibility.

The present food crisis is due to the fact that a more difficult half year has begun. It is also due to the condition of the transport system. I have already said that in the second half of 1918 we procured 67,500,000 poods. But 20,000,000 of these 67,500,000 we were unable to get out. The latest drastic crisis in Petrograd is due to the fact that our stocks are lying on the Volga-Bugulma Railway, and we cannot ship them out. The state of the railways is desperate. The rolling stock is in a frightful state, because no country has suffered so heavily as Russia, owing to her prevailing backwardness, and because on the railways we have not such solid proletarian masses. I would ask you to take from this meeting and convey to the masses the knowledge that we need innumerable workers for food organisation and for the railways, and that they must help us with their experience. Put them on the job, keep an eye on the novices, and they will do a lot more than the old organisations. Everybody on food and transport work! Let every organisation, no matter which branch it belongs to, pass all its forces under review and ask itself: has it taken enough men, has it done all it should in the way of sending commissars, as we send them into the army? The workers are in a state of exhaustion from lack of food. We must put our best people on the job, appoint them all to responsible military, food or transport posts. Everybody can be of use here, even if he is not an expert. On the railways it is sometimes the aid of a party comrade that is required, the effect exercised by an ideologically staunch proletarian who has had his schooling and will influence the less proletarian sections of railway employees by control and supervision. I once more repeat the cry: "Everybody on food and transport work!" We must do here what we did in the army, where we sent our political commissars and achieved what we wanted. I am certain that this time, too, in this difficult half year we shall achieve what we want and shall vanquish famine and economic chaos!

Speech at joint session of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, the Moscow Soviet and the All-Russian Trade Union Congress, January 17, 1919.

Izvestia, No. 12 (564), January 18, 1919.

## THE SOVIET APPARATUS "

AS FAR as I have been able to acquaint myself with the resolutions, with the two projects submitted after the discussion on the relations between centre and districts—the first for an improvement of Soviet affairs, and the second for a complete reconstruction of the Soviet apparatus—the second, contained in the motion of a group of comrades, gives the impression that not all has been said, inasmuch as no definite grounds exist for the change in the Soviet apparatus proposed in this resolution.

Our enemy today is bureaucracy and profiteering. Owing to economic disruption, we can see no improvement; but the disruption can be repaired only by centralisation, by renouncing purely local interests. And it is such interests, apparently, that have given rise to the opposition to centralism, which, however, is the only way out of our present situation. The group of comrades who submitted this resolution are abandoning centralism for the quagmire of localism.

It appears that the districts are dissatisfied because certain decisions of the central Soviet government are taken without their being discussed with the districts. If that is so, the districts have every right to convene conferences to discuss all questions in which they are interested. We are being eaten up by bureaucracy, which is very difficult to cope with. It has to be vigorously fought, and more workingmen have to be appointed to the government offices. But when the attack on bureaucracy is directed to the wrong quarter, things become very dangerous, as, for example, in relation to the experts. The reason we are in a bad way is not because we have got too many experts, but because we have not got strict centralisation. On the contrary, there are spheres of Soviet work which are suffering from a shortage of experts. We must appoint to the government offices more workers of the average type, who would learn their jobs from the experts and be able

to replace them and do the practical work independently. Thus it is evident that the theses submitted by Comrade Ignatov do not say what these comrades really want. The attack is being levied at the wrong quarter.

Speech at Moscow City Conference of the Russian Communist Party, January 18, 1919.

Pravda, No. 19, January 28, 1919.

## THE TASKS OF THE TEACHERS

COMRADES, allow me to greet your congress on behalf of the Council of People's Commissars. The teachers are now faced with tasks of the highest importance, and I hope that after the year we have just been through, after the struggle that has been going on among the teachers-between those who took their stand from the very first with the Soviet government to work for the socialist revolution, and that section of the teachers who have so far stood by the old system—by the old prejudice that teaching can continue to be based on the old system—I think that now, after a year of struggle, after what has taken place in international affairs, this struggle should come to an end, and is in fact coming to an end. There can be no doubt that the vast majority of the teachers, who stand close to the working class and the labouring section of the peasantry, are now convinced that the socialist revolution is deeply rooted, and is inevitably spreading all over the world; and I think that now the vast majority of the teachers will quite sincerely come over to and remain on the side of the government of the toilers and exploited in the struggle for the socialist revolution and in the struggle against that section of the teachers who still stand by the old bourgeois prejudices, the old system and hypocrisies, and imagine that some part of that system can be salvaged.

One of these bourgeois hypocrisies is the belief that the school can stand aloof from politics. You know how false this belief is. The bourgeoisie itself, which advocated this principle, made its own bourgeois politics the cornerstone of the school system, and tried to reduce education to the drilling of docile and efficient servants of the bourgeoisie, to reduce even universal education from top to bottom to the drilling of docile and efficient servants for the bourgeoisie, of slaves and tools of capital, and never gave a thought to making the school an instru-

ment of human personality, irrespective of class. And now it is clear to all that this can be done only by a socialist school having inseparable bonds with all the toiling and exploited and wholeheartedly supporting the Soviet platform.

Of course, the reconstruction of education is no easy matter. And, of course, mistakes have been and still are being committed in this sphere, as are attempts to misinterpret the principle of the connection between education and politics and to put a crude and distorted construction on it; attempts to stuff these politics into the minds of the young rising generation when they should still be learning. And there can be no doubt that we shall always have to combat such crude applications of this basic principle. But today the chief task of those members of the teaching profession who have taken their stand with the International and the Soviet government is to work for the creation of a wider and, as nearly as possible, an all-embracing teachers' union.

There is no place in your union, the union of the internationalists, for the old teachers' union, which clung to bourgeois prejudices and revealed its lack of understanding and fought to the last ditch. It fought longer even than other "higher" unions, which were formed at the very beginning of the 1917 revolution and which we combated in all spheres of life, fought to uphold similar privileges. In my opinion, your internationalists' union may very well become the only school-teachers' trade union, standing, like all the other trade unions—as has been very clearly shown by the Second All-Russian Trade Union Congress—on the platform of Soviet government. The task facing the teachers is immense. What is more, they have to combat the survivals of the slovenliness and disunity we have inherited from the last revolution.

Next, as regards propaganda and agitation. In view of the lack of confidence in the teachers caused by the sabotage and prejudices of the bourgeois section of the teaching body, who are accustomed to think that only the rich are entitled to real education, while for the majority, the working people, it is enough to be trained to be good servants and good workers, but not the real masters of life—in view of this, it is only natural that disunity still prevails in every sphere of propaganda and education. This condemns a section of the teachers to a narrow sphere, the sphere of pseudo-education, and has prevented us from fully creating a single apparatus in which all scientific forces

would merge and would collaborate with us. We shall succeed in doing this only as we discard the old bourgeois prejudices. And here the task of your union is to draw the broad mass of the teachers into your family, to educate the most backward sections of the teaching profession, to bring them into the service of the general proletarian policy, and to weld them together into one common organisation.

In the matter of trade union organisation, a big job lies on the shoulders of the teachers in the present situation of our country, when all the issues of the civil war are becoming quite clear, and when the petty-bourgeois democratic elements are being compelled by the logic of things to come over to the side of the Soviet government, for they have seen for themselves that any other course will drive them willy-nilly towards defending the White Guardism of international imperialism. Now that one cardinal task is on the order of the day all over the world, the issue stands as follows: either extreme reaction, military dictatorship and shootings-of which we have had striking illustrations from Berlin-either this vicious reaction of the capitalist brutes who feel that they will not go unpunished for these four years of war, and are therefore prepared to go to any lengths, to go on drenching the earth in the blood of the working people, or the complete victory of the working people in a socialist revolution. Today there can be no middle course. And that is why those teachers who from the very first took their stand with the international, and who now clearly perceive that their opponents among the teachers of the other camp cannot put up any serious resistance, must launch into far wider activities. Your union should now become a broad teachers' trade union embracing vast numbers of teachers, a union which will resolutely take up its stand on the Soviet platform and the struggle for socialism by means of a dictatorship of the proletariat.

That is the formula adopted by the Second Trade Union Congress now in session. The Congress demands that all who are engaged in a given profession, in a given sphere of activity, should unite to form one single union; but at the same time it declares that the trade union movement cannot hold aloof from the fundamental tasks of the struggle for the emancipation of labour from the yoke of capital. And, consequently, only those unions can be full and equal members of the trade union family which recognise the revolutionary class struggle for socialism by means of a dictatorship of the proletariat. Your union is a union of this kind. If you stand by that position, you

will be sure of success in winning over the greater bulk of the teachers and in working to make knowledge and science, no longer a thing for the privileged, no longer a medium for reinforcing the position of the rich and exploiters, but a weapon for the emanciaption of the toiling and exploited. In this sphere allow me to wish you every success.

Speech at Second All-Russian Congress of Internationalist Teachers, January 18, 1919.

Published in the first (1926) edition of V. I. Lenin's Collected Work, Vol. XX, Book II.

# THE MURDER OF ROSA LUXEMBURG AND KARL LIEBKNECHT

TODAY the bourgeoisie and the social-traitors are jubilating in Berlin—they have succeeded in murdering Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg. Ebert and Scheidemann, who for four years drove the workers to the shambles for the sake of piratical interests, have now assumed the role of butchers of the proletarian leaders. The example of the German revolution proves that "democracy" is only a camouflage for bourgeois robbery and the most savage violence.

Death to the butchers!

Brief newspaper account of speech delivered January 19, 1919.

Prauda, No. 14, January 21, 1919.

### THE TASKS OF THE TRADE UNIONS

COMRADES, I must first excuse myself for being obliged, owing to a slight indisposition, to confine myself today to only a few remarks on the question which is now under your consideration—the tasks of the trade unions.

The resolution now before you has been submitted to the Trade Union Congress by the Communist group, which has discussed it from every angle. As the resolution has been printed, I presume that all present are acquainted with it, and I will therefore dwell only on two main points, which in my opinion are the most significant of those dealt with in general in this resolution.

It seems to me that the first of these points, one of a negative character, so to speak, is the statement regarding the flag of unity or independence of the trade union movement, the flag in reference to which clause 3 of the resolution declares that in practice it has led the groups which support this slogan to an open struggle against the Soviet government, and that this attempt has placed them—that is, these groups—outside the ranks of the working class.

It seems to me, that this famous slogan of independence is deserving of attention not only from the trade union standpoint. In my opinion, the struggle over the issue of dictatorship of the proletariat or dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, which is now going on all over the world and which is obviously coming to a head with unprecedented speed, can be properly understood, can be properly reckoned with. And the working class, its class-conscious representatives, can take a proper part in this struggle, only if it understands what self-deception on the part of some, and plain deception on the part of others, this slogan of independence represents. First of all, I should like to point out, if only briefly, how false this slogan is theoretically, and to show

that from the theoretical standpoint it will not stand the least shadow of criticism.

What has lately happened in Germany, the brutal and treacherous murder of Liebknecht and Luxemburg, is not only the most dramatic and tragic event in the revolution beginning in Germany. It is something more; it sheds an extraordinarily vivid light on the way the problems of the present-day struggle are regarded by the various trends of political thought, how they are treated by the various theoretical systems of today. It was from Germany that we heard most talk, for example, on the celebrated subject of democracy, on the slogan of democracy in general, and on the slogan that the working class must be independent of the government power. These slogans may at a cursory glance seem to have no connection with each other, but actually they are very closely connected indeed. They are closely connected because they show how strong petty-bourgeois prejudices are to this day, notwithstanding the immense experience of the class struggle of the proletariat; how to this day the class struggle is also often recognised only by the lips, as the Germans put it, and not by the minds or hearts of those who talk about it. And, indeed, if we recall even the rudiments of political economy as we learnt it from Marx's Capital, of that theory of the class struggle by which we all stand foursquare—when the struggle has grown as acute and far-flung as it is today, and it is clear that the socialist revolution has been placed on the agenda all over the world, and when this has been palpably demonstrated in the most democratic countries—how can there be any talk of democracy in general, how can there be any talk of independence? Whoever thinks there can shows that as far as the theory of political economy is concerned he has not understood a single page of Marx's Capital, by which all Socialists of all countries without exception now swear.

But, as a matter of fact, although they swear by this work, now that they are on the verge of that cardinal struggle to which Marx's Capital led, they retreat from this class struggle and imagine that there can be a democracy standing outside of class or above class, that in modern society, while the capitalists still retain their property, there can be any other democracy than bourgeois democracy, that is, a bourgeois dictatorship masked by false and lying democratic labels. It was from this very Germany that we recently heard voices saying that over there the dictatorship of the proletariat, most likely, in fact

most certainly, would not transcend the bounds of democracy, that there democracy would remain intact. It was there that people who claim to be teachers of Marxism, people who from 1889 to 1914 were the ideologists of the entire Second International, people like Kautsky, unfurled the banner of democracy and failed to understand that as long as property remains in the hands of the capitalists democracy is nothing but a thoroughly hypocritical mask for the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. They failed to understand that there cannot be any serious question of the emancipation of labour from the yoke of capital as long as this hypocritical mask is not torn away, and as long as we do not put the question, as Marx always taught us to put it, and as we have been taught to put it by the day-to-day struggle of the proletariat, by every strike and by every acute turn in the trade union struggle-namely, that while property remains in the hands of the capitalists, no democracy will be anything but a hypocritical mask for the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. All talk about universal suffrage, about the will of the people, and about equality at the polls will be a sheer fraud, for there can be no equality between the exploiter and the exploited, between the owner of capital and property and the modern wage slave.

Of course, compared with tsardom, absolutism, monarchy and all the other survivals of feudalism, bourgeois democracy historically denotes immense progress. Of course, we shall have to utilise it; and we say that until the time comes for the struggle of the working class for full power it is incumbent on us to make use of the forms of bourgeois democracy. But the fact of the matter is that we have now arrived at this decisive moment of the struggle internationally. For the issue now is whether the capitalists can maintain their power over the means of production and, above all, their ownership of the implements of production. And that means that they are preparing for new wars. The imperialist war has quite clearly demonstrated how capitalist property is connected with that slaughter of the nations, how it has led up to it irresistibly and inexorably. But that being the case, all talk of democracy expressing the will of the people is obviously shown to be a sheer deception, to be nothing but the privilege of the capitalists and the rich to dope the more backward sections of the working people both through their press, which remains in the hands of the property owners, and by all the other means of political influence.

There is and can be only one alternative: either the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, disguised by Constituent Assemblies, votings of every kind, democracy and similar bourgeois frauds that are used to blind the eyes of fools and that only people who have become renegades from Marxism and from socialism through and through and all along the line can make play of today—or the dictatorship of the proletariat, in order, with an iron hand, to suppress the bourgeoisie, which is inciting the most backward elements against the finest leaders of the world proletariat; the victory of the proletariat for the purpose of suppressing the bourgeoisie, which is now organising a most desperate resistance to the proletariat, resistance that waxes the more furious, the more clearly the bourgeoisie perceives that it is the masses that have raised this issue. For hitherto, in the vast majority of cases, it regarded dissatisfaction and indignation among the workers as only a temporary expression of their discontent. That, in fact, is the way the matter is regarded to this day by the British capitalists, for example, who are perhaps the most experienced in politically deceiving the workers, and politically the best educated and the best organised. The way most of them regard the matter to this day is that the war has, of course, led to discontent, and this discontent inevitably gives rise to and will continue to give rise to unrest among the workers; but as to raising the question of who is to head the state, who is to hold the state power, and whether the capitalists are to be allowed to retain their property—that they haven't done yet. But events have shown that this question has undoubtedly been put on the order of the day, not only in Russia, but in a number of West-European countries as well, and, what is more, not only in countries which took part in the war, but in neutral countries, too, which have suffered relatively little, such as Switzerland and Holland.

The bourgeoisie has above all been reared, and has reared the masses, in the spirit of bourgeois parliamentarism. Yet among the masses—as has become perfectly clear—a Soviet movement, a movement for Soviet government has been ripening. The Soviet movement has ceased to be a Russian form of the power of the proletariat; it has become the platform of the proletariat internationally in its struggle for power; it has become the second step towards the world-wide development of the socialist revolution. The first step was the Paris Commune, which showed that the working class cannot arrive at socialism except by way of a dictatorship, by the forcible suppression

of the exploiters. That is the first thing the Paris Commune showed, namely, that the working class cannot proceed towards socialism by way of the old, bourgeois democratic parliamentary state, but only by way of a state of a new type, which will smash both parliamentarism and the bureaucracy from top to bottom.

The second step from the standpoint of the world-wide development of the socialist revolution was the Soviet state. And if it was at first considered a purely Russian phenomenon—as it might well have been, and was in fact bound to be considered, when judged only by the facts—today events have shown that it is not only a Russian phenomenon, but the international form of the struggle of the proletariat; that the wars which have reshuffled the proletarian and semi-proletarian masses have furnished them with a new form of organisation, which is patently in direct opposition to rapacious imperialism, to the capitalist class and its fabulous profits, profits without precedent before the war, and have everywhere created these new mass fighting organisations, organisations of the proletariat for the overthrow of the power of the bourgeoisie.

Not everybody realised that this in fact was what the Soviets signified when they arose. Not everybody realises it even today. But to us, who saw the germs of these Soviets in 1905, and who after the February Revolution of 1917 witnessed a long period of hesitation and vacillation between the Soviet organisation of the masses and the compromising, treacherous, petty-bourgeois ideology—to us the picture could not be clearer. It lies before us as though in the palm of our hand, and it is with this picture in mind-and knowing the way the struggle of the proletariat against capitalist property for state power has developed and is growing wider and deeper every day—that we approach the matter. And knowing this, what is the value of all the references to democracy and all the talk about "independence" and the like, which is constantly tending towards some classless position, forgetting the fact that in capitalist society it is the bourgeoisie that rules, that capitalist society in fact arises from the power of the bourgeoisie in politics and economics. It is only the power of the proletariat, and nothing intermediate, that can decide issues of any seriousness for any length of time. And anyone who talks about independence, about democracy in general, consciously or unconsciously presupposes something intermediate, something standing between classes or above classes. And that in every case is self-deception or deception of others; it serves

to conceal the fact that as long as the power of the capitalists remains, as long as the capitalists retain the ownership of the means of production, democracy may be broad or narrow, more civilised or less, and so on and so forth, but it actually remains the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, and all the more obviously and palpably for that every big contradiction is a fertile source of civil war.

The nearer the political forms of France are to democracy, the more easily does a case like the Dreyfus case give rise to civil war. The broader democracy is in America, with its proletariat, its internationalists, and even pure pacifists, the more easily do cases of lynching and outbreaks of civil war arise. The meaning of this is all the clearer now, when the first week of bourgeois freedom, of democracy, in Germany has led to a most frenzied outbreak of civil war, far more acute and far more desperate than in our country. And whoever judges these outbreaks from the standpoint of whether a party has been brought to trial or not, whoever judges them simply from the standpoint of the murder of Liebknecht and Luxemburg, retires into a shell of blindness and intellectual cowardice, refusing to understand that what we have here are outbreaks of an irresistible civil war, a war that springs irresistibly from the contradictions of capitalism. There is no middle course, nor can there be. All talk of independence or democracy in general, no matter what sauce it may be served up with, is a sheer fraud and a heinous betrayal of socialism. And if the theoretical propaganda of the Bolsheviks, who are now the virtual founders of the International, if the theoretical teaching of the Bolsheviks on the subject of civil war did not reach very far and was all too often halted by obstacles of censorship and the military barrages of the imperialist states, today it is no longer the teaching, no longer the theory, but the facts of civil war that are becoming the more violent, the older the democracy of the West-European states and the longer it has lasted. These facts will pierce even the hardest and most obtuse skulls. Even the best of the people who talk about democracy in general, about independence, may now be called fossils.

Nevertheless, bearing in mind the difficult conditions of the struggle amidst which the trade union movement of Russia has so recently arisen and grown up—and it has now almost reached its full growth—we must, in passing, cast a glance back and recall past events. In my opinion, such recollections and reminders are all the more necessary for the fact that the trade union movement, as such, is having to

undergo a particularly abrupt change in the era of world-wide socialist revolution that has now begun.

It was in the trade union movement especially that the ideologists of the bourgeoisie tried to fish in troubled waters. They strove to make the economic struggle, which is the basis of the trade union movement, independent of the political struggle. But now, precisely now, especially after the political revolution, which has transferred the power to the proletariat, the time has come when the trade unions, as the broadest organisation of the proletariat on a class scale, have to play a very big part, to occupy the most central position in politics, to become, in a sense, the chief political organ; for all the old concepts and categories of politics have been upset and reversed by the political revolution which has turned over the power to the proletariat. The old state, as built even by the best and most democratic bourgeois republics, was never, I repeat, and never could be, anything but the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, that is, of those who own the factories, the implements of production, the land, the railways-in a word, all the material means, all the instruments of labour, without the possession of which labour remains slavery.

That is why, when the political power passed into the hands of the proletariat, the trade unions had increasingly to assume the role of builders of working class politics, the role of people whose class organisation was to replace the old exploiting class and upset all the old traditions and prejudices of the old philosophy which, through the mouth of one of the philosophers, said to the proletariat: "You look after your economic affairs, and as to politics, the party of the bourgeois elements will look after that." Teachings like this have proved to be nothing but a weapon in the hands of the exploiting class and its thugs for the suppression of the proletariat, which was everywhere passing to revolt and struggle.

And here the trade unions must raise an entirely new question in their work of state construction—the question of governmentalising the trade unions, as it is termed in the resolution submitted by the Communist group. In this connection the trade unions must ponder very seriously over the profound and famous words of the founders of modern communism to the effect that the broader and deeper the revolution going on in society, the larger should be the number of people who make this revolution, who are its makers in the true sense of the word. <sup>48</sup> Take the old society of the feudal nobility. Their

revolutions were absurdly easy, as long as it was only a matter of taking the power from one handful of nobles or feudal lords and turning it over to another. Take bourgeois society, which boasts of its universal suffrage. Actually, however, as we know, this universal suffrage, this whole machine, becomes a fraud, for even in the most advanced, cultured and democratic countries the overwhelming majority of the working people are downtrodden and crushed—crushed by the hell of capitalist life, so that actually they do not and cannot take any part in politics.

Now for the first time in the history of mankind a revolution has begun which can lead to the complete victory of socialism-provided only that new and large masses of people themselves set about the work of governing. The socialist revolution does not imply a change in the form of state, not the replacement of a monarchy by a republic, nor new elections in which people are assumed to be absolutely "equal" but which are actually nothing but an artificial consummation, a screen for the fact that some own property while others do not. From the point of view of the bourgeois society, once there is "democracy," and once capitalist and proletarian alike take part in the voting, this is the "will of the people," this is "equality" and an expression of its wishes. We know what an abominable fraud this talk is, which only serves as a cover for butchers and murderers like Ebert and Scheidemann. In bourgeois society, the masses, the working people, are governed by the bourgeoisie, with the help of more or less democratic forms; they are governed by a minority, the property owners, those who have a share in capitalist property and who have turned education and science, that supreme bulwark and flower of capitalist civilisation, into an instrument of exploitation, into a monopoly, in order to keep the overwhelming majority of the people in slavery. The revolution we have begun and have already been making for two years, and which we are firmly determined to carry to its conclusion, is possible and feasible only provided we achieve the transfer of power to the new class, provided the bourgeoisie, the capitalist slave-owners, the bourgeois intellectuals, the representatives of all the owners and property holders are replaced by the new class in all spheres of government, in all government affairs, in the entire business of directing the new life, from top to bottom.

Such is the task that now confronts us. Only when this new class begins to learn, not from books, not from meetings or lectures, but

from the practical work of government, only when it enlists the broadest masses of the labouring people for this work, only when it elaborates forms which will afford all labouring people the opportunity of easily adapting themselves to the work of governing the state and establishing the government regime, only then can the socialist revolution be lasting, and only on this condition is it bound to be lasting. Given this condition, it will constitute a force which will brush away capitalism and all its survivals as easily as a straw, as easily as a handful of dust.

From the class standpoint, speaking generally, such is the task which confronts us as a condition for the victory of the socialist revolution. It is a task closely and directly associated with the tasks of those organisations which even under capitalist society worked for the broadest possible mass struggle for the abolition of that society. And of the organisations that then existed, the trade unions were the broadest; and now, while formally remaining independent organisations, they can and should, as one of the passages in the resolution before you states, "take an active part in the work of the Soviet government by directly working in all government bodies, by organising mass control over their activities, etc., and by setting up new organs for the registration, control and regulation of all production and distribution, resting on the organised initiative of the broad masses of the interested working people themselves."

Never in capitalist society, even under the most favourable circumstances, even in the most advanced countries, after decades and sometimes even centuries of development of bourgeois democratic civilisation and culture, have the trade unions embraced more than one-fifth of the wage workers. Only a small upper stratum belonged to them; and of this upper stratum only a very few were lured over and bribed by the capitalists to take their place in capitalist society as leaders of the workers. The American Socialists called these people "labour lieutenants" of the capitalist class. In that country of freest bourgeois culture, in that most democratic of bourgeois republics, they saw most clearly the role played by this tiny upper stratum of the proletariat who had virtually entered the service of the bourgeoisie as its deputies, who were bribed and bought by it, and who came to form those cadres of social-patriots and defencists of which Ebert and Scheidemann will always remain the shining lights.

In our country the case is now different. The trade unions are in

a position to start the economic development of the state on new lines, making use of everything that has been created by capitalist culture and by capitalist production, building socialism on that material basis, on that large-scale industry, the burden of which weighed on us, was created against our interests, was made for the endless oppression of the working masses but which united and welded them, and thus created the vanguard of the new society. And since the October Revolution, since the transfer of power to the proletariat, this vanguard has begun to perform its real task-to educate the toiling and exploited masses, to enlist them in the work of governing the state and administering industry, without officials, without a bourgeoisie, without capitalists. That is why the resolution we submit to you rejects all bourgeois plans and all that treacherous talk. That is why it declares the governmentalisation of the trade unions to be unavoidable. It also takes a step forward. We are no longer raising the question of the governmentalisation of the trade unions merely in its theoretical aspect. We have, thank God, passed the stage when such questions were raised purely as subjects for theoretical discussion. We may even forget at times the days when we used to engage in such free discussions on purely theoretical themes. Those times have long since passed, and today we are raising these questions on the basis of a year's experience of the trade unions, which, in their role of organisers of production, have created such organisations as the Supreme Council of National Economy. These organisations, in this incredibly difficult business, have committed innumerable blunders, and are still committing them, but they are not deterred by the malicious sneers of the bourgeoisie, who say: "Our friends the proletarians have decided to build, and look at the blunders they are making."

The bourgeoisie imagines that it made no blunders when it took over affairs from the tsar and the nobles. It imagines that the Reform of 1861, which attempted to repair the edifice of serfdom, and left the power and abundant sources of revenue in the hands of the serf-owners, went off quite smoothly and that it was not followed by chaos in Russia for several decades. There is no country in the world in which the nobility did not scoff at the upstart bourgeois and commoners when they set out to govern the state.

It goes without saying that the entire flower, or, rather, sterile blossom, of the bourgeois intelligentsia is now also scoffing at every mistake the new government is making, especially since the new class, the alliance of the working people, because of the frantic resistance of the exploiters and the campaign of the world alliance of exploiters against Russia—one of the weakest and least prepared of countries has had to make its revolution with furious speed, under conditions in which it had to think not so much of making the course of revolution smooth, as of holding on as best it could until the West-European proletariat began to awaken. This task we have accomplished. In this respect we may already say that we are much more fortunate than the men who made the French Revolution, which was defeated by an alliance of monarchical and backward countries; which, in the form of the power of the lower ranks of the bourgeoisie of that time maintained itself in power for only a year, which did not at once evoke a similar movement in other countries, and which, nevertheless, did so much for the bourgeoisie, for the bourgeois bureaucracy, that the entire development of civilised humanity throughout the nineteenth century sprang from the Great French Revolution, and was indebted to it for everything.

We are much more fortunate. What was done in a year for the development of the bourgeois bureaucracy, we have done on a far larger scale for the new proletarian regime in about the same time. And we have done it so successfully that already the movement in Russia, whose beginning was not due to any merit of ours, but to a special set of circumstances and to special conditions that put Russia between two imperialist giants of the modern civilised world—that the effect of this movement and of the victory of the Soviet system during the past year has been that the movement itself has become international, that the Communist International has been founded, that the slogans and ideals of the old bourgeois democracy have been shattered, and that today there is no intelligent politician anywhere in the world, whatever his party may be, who can fail to see that the international socialist revolution has begun and is under way.

I have digressed somewhat in touching on the subject of how, having left the theoretical discussion of the problem far behind us, we are now about to tackle its practical solution. We have had a year's experience, and it has already accomplished incomparably more for the victory of the proletariat and its revolution than was accomplished by a year's dictatorship of bourgeois democracy for the victory of this bourgeois democracy all over the world at the end of the century

before last. But, besides this, we have, during this year, acquired a vast amount of practical experience, which enables us, if not to calculate every one of our steps with absolute precision, at least to indicate the rate, the speed of development, to perceive its practical difficulties, to perceive the practical steps which will lead from one partial victory in the matter of overthrowing the bourgeoisie to another.

Looking back, we can see the mistakes we have to correct; we can clearly see what we have to build and how we have to build in the future. That is why our resolution does not confine itself to proclaiming the governmentalisation of the trade unions, to proclaiming the dictatorship of the proletariat in principle and the need for our proceeding, as one passage in the resolution states, "inevitably to the fusion of the trade union organisations with the organs of state power"—that we already know from theory; that we already outlined before October, and we should have outlined it even sooner. But it is not enough. For a party which is now about to tackle the practical job of building socialism, for trade unions which have already set up organs for the administration of industry on an all-Russian and nationwide scale, which have already formed a Supreme Council of National Economy, and which have at the cost of thousands of mistakes themselves acquired thousands of phases of experience in organisation, the important question now is not the same as it was before.

Today we can no longer confine ourselves to proclaiming the dictatorship of the proletariat. It is inevitable that the trade unions be governmentalised; it is inevitable that they be fused with the organs of state power; it is inevitable that the work of building up large-scale industry be entrusted entirely to them. But all that is not enough.

We must also learn the lesson from our practical experience in order to determine the next immediate step. That is the essence of our task just now. And that is what the resolution has in mind when it says that if the trade unions were arbitrarily to attempt to take over the functions of state power now, it would only result in a mess. We have suffered enough from this sort of thing. We have fought hard enough against the survivals of the accursed bourgeois system, against the anarchistic or egoistic tendencies of the small owner which are so deeply ingrained even among the workers.

The workers were never separated by a Chinese Wall from the old society. And they have preserved a good deal of the traditional mentality of capitalist society. The workers are building a new society

without themselves having become new people, cleansed of the filth of the old world; they are still standing up to their knees in that filth. We can only dream of cleansing ourselves of that filth. It would be the height of utopianism to think that this can be done all at once. It would be a utopianism which in practice would only postpone socialism to kingdom come.

No, that is not the way we are setting out to build socialism. We are doing so while still standing on the soil of capitalist society, combating all those weaknesses and shortcomings with which the working people are also affected and which tend to drag the proletariat down. There are many old separatist habits and customs of the small-owner in this struggle, and we still feel the effects of the old maxim: "Every man for himself, and the devil take the hindmost." There was quite enough of that in every trade union, in every factory, which often thought only of itself, and left everything else to the tender care of the Lord and our betters. We have been through all that; and know at what a cost. It has been the cause of so many mistakes, so many dreadful mistakes, that now we have learnt the lesson from experience, and we say to our comrades: We most emphatically warn you against any arbitrary action in this field. We say that this would not mean building socialism; it would mean that we had all succumbed to the weaknesses of capitalism.

We have now learnt to appreciate the difficulties of the task that confronts us. We stand at the very heart of the work of building socialism, and in the interests of this cardinal work we are against all arbitrary actions in this sphere. The class-conscious workers must be warned against arbitrary actions of this kind. They must be told that we cannot merge the trade unions with the organs of state power at once, at one stroke. It would be a mistake. That is not the way the job must be tackled.

We know that the proletariat has promoted several thousand, perhaps several tens of thousands of proletarians to the work of administering the state. We know that the new class—the proletariat—now has its representatives in every branch of state administration, in every section of the enterprises already socialised or about to be socialised, and in every branch of economy. The proletariat knows this. It has set about the job practically. It can now see that we must continue along the same lines, that we shall have to take quite a number of steps more before we are in a position to say that the trade union

organisations of the working people have definitely merged with the state apparatus. That will take place when the workers completely take over the organs of authority of one class over the others. And that it will take place, we know for certain.

We now want to focus your attention on the next practical job. We must go on extending the participation of the working people in the administration of economic life and in the building of a new industry. Unless we cope with this task, unless we convert the trade unions into organs for the training of masses, ten times as numerous as at present, to take a direct part in the administration of the state, we shall never bring the work of communist construction to its completion. That we realise quite clearly; it is dealt with in our resolution, and it is a matter I want to direct your attention to most of all.

In this greatest revolution in history, when the proletariat has taken the power of state into its own hands, all the functions of the trade unions are undergoing profound change. The trade unions are becoming the chief builders of the new society, for only the millions can be the builders of this society. In the era of serfdom these builders numbered hundreds; in the era of capitalism the builders of the state numbered thousands and tens of thousands; the socialist revolution can be made only with the active and direct practical participation in the administration of the state of tens of millions. That is the goal we are heading for, but we have not yet reached it.

The trade unions should know that there is a higher and more important task than those tasks which are partly still in force and partly have already lapsed, and which, at any rate, even if they are still in force, can only be minor ones in our eyes: registration, working out of standards, amalgamation of organisations. This task is to teach the masses the art of administration, not from books, not from lectures or meetings, but from practical experience, so that in place of the vanguard section which the proletariat has advanced from its midst and set to command and organise, larger and larger numbers, ever newer sections of the workers, may enter the departments, and that the place of each new section may be taken by ten others like it. This may seem an immense and difficult task. But if we stop to think how rapidly the experience of the revolution has made it possible to cope with the immense tasks raised since the October Revolution, and how the working people who had had no access to and no use for

knowledge are now thirsting for it—if we stop to think that, this task will cease to seem immense.

We shall find that we can cope with this task and teach vast masses of the working people the business of administering the state and administering industry, that we can develop practical activity, and shatter that pernicious prejudice which for decades and centuries has been implanted among the working masses, namely, that the administration of the state is the business of the privileged few, that it is a special art. That is not true. We shall inevitably make mistakes: but now every mistake will serve to teach, not handfuls of students taking some theoretical course in state administration, but millions of working people who will personally suffer the consequences of every mistake, will themselves see that they are faced with the urgent task of registering and distributing products, of increasing productivity of labour, and who can see from experience that the power is in their own hands and that nobody will help them if they do not help themselves. That is the new mentality which is awakening in the working class; that is the new task of tremendous historical importance which faces the proletariat and which must, more than any other, strike root in the minds of the trade unionists and of the leaders of the trade union movement. They are not only trade unions. Today they are trade unions only to the extent that they are constituted within the only possible framework linked with the old capitalist system, and embrace the largest number of working people. But their task is to advance these millions and tens of millions of working people from simple to higher forms of activity, untiringly drawing new forces from the reserve of working people and advancing them to the most difficult tasks. In this way they will teach ever larger numbers the art of state administration; to identify themselves with the struggle of the proletariat, which has taken the dictatorship into its own hands and is retaining it in the face of the whole world, every day winning over section after section of industrial workers and Socialists in all countries who only yesterday tolerated the orders of the social-traitors and social-defencists, but who are today coming more and more to accept the banner of communism and of the Communist International.

Hold this banner firmly, and at the same time steadily enlarge the ranks of the builders of socialism; remember that the task of the trade unions is to be the builders of the new life and the educators of new millions and tens of millions, who will learn by experience not to

make mistakes and learn to discard the old prejudices, who will learn by their own experience to administer the state and industry—for that is the only certain guarantee that the cause of socialism will completely triumph, precluding every possibility of a reversion to the past.

Report at Second All-Russian Trade Union Congress, January 20, 1919.

Published in Stenographic Report of the Second All-Russian Trade Union Congress, 1921.

### LETTER TO THE WORKERS OF EUROPE AND AMERICA

COMRADES, at the end of my letter to the American workers of August 20, 1918, \* I said that we were in a besieged fortress until other armies of the international socialist revolution come to our aid. The workers, I added, were breaking with their social-traitors, the Gomperses and Renners. The workers were advancing slowly but surely towards Communist, Bolshevik tactics.

Since the time these words were written, less than five months have elapsed, and it must be said that the ripening of the world proletarian revolution, in connection with the adoption of Communism and Bolshevism by the workers of various countries, has in this interval proceeded with extraordinary rapidity.

Then, on August 20, 1918, our party, the Bolshevik Party, was the only party to have definitely broken with the old, Second International of 1889-1914, which had suffered such ignominious bankruptcy during the imperialist war of 1914-18. Ours was the only party to have completely taken the new path away from socialism and social-democratism, which had disgraced itself by an alliance with the piratical bourgeoisie, to communism; from petty-bourgeois reformism and opportunism, with which the official Social-Democratic and Socialist parties were and are so thoroughly imbued, to real proletarian revolutionary tactics.

Now, on January 12, 1919, we have a number of Communist, proletarian parties, not only within the confines of the former tsarist empire, as, for example, in Latvia, Finland and Poland, but also in Western Europe—in Austria, Hungary, Holland and, lastly, in Germany. When the German Spartacus League, headed by such world-known and world-renowned leaders, such loyal champions of the working class as Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg, Clara Zetkin and Franz Mehring completely broke off all connection with Socialists of the type of Scheidemann and Sudekum, with these social-chauvinists

<sup>•</sup> See pages 192-204 in this volume.—Ed.

(Socialists in word and chauvinists in deed) who have forever disgraced themselves by their alliance with the piratical, imperialist bourgeoisie of Germany and with Wilhelm II, when the Spartacus League took the name of the Communist Party of Germany, the foundation of a really proletarian, really internationalist, really revolutionary Third International, the Communist International, became a fact. This foundation has not yet been formally endorsed, but actually the Third International already exists.

Today no class-conscious worker, no sincere Socialist can help seeing how despicably socialism has been betrayed by those who, like the Mensheviks and "Socialist-Revolutionaries" in Russia, supported their "own" bourgeoisies in the war of 1914-18: the Scheidemanns and Sudekums in Germany, Renaudels and Vanderveldes in France, Hendersons and Webbs in England, and Gompers and Co. in America.

This war has been completely exposed as an imperialist, reactionary, predatory war on the part both of Germany and of the capitalists of England, France, Italy and America, who are now beginning to fall out among themselves over the division of the spoils, over the partitioning of Turkey, Russia, the African and Polynesian colonies, the Balkans, etc. It is surprising how quickly the hypocritical talk of Wilson and the "Wilsonites" about "democracy" and a "league of nations" is being shown up for what it is worth by the seizure of the left bank of the Rhine by the French bourgeoisie, and of Turkey (Syria and Mesopotamia) and parts of Russia (Siberia, Archangel, Baku, Krasnovodsk, Askhabad, etc.) by the French, British and American capitalists, and in face of the growing enmity over the division of the spoils between Italy and France, France and England, England and America, and America and Japan.

And side by side with the cowardly, lukewarm "Socialists" who are thoroughly steeped in the prejudices of bourgeois democracy, and who yesterday defended their "own" imperialist governments and today are confining themselves to platonic "protests" against military intervention in Russia, there are growing numbers of people in the Entente countries who are following the Communist road, the road of McLean, Debs, Loriot, Lazzari and Serrati, of people who have realised that only the overthrow of the bourgeoise and the abolition of bourgeois parliaments, only Soviet government and the dictatorship of the proletariat are capable of suppressing imperialism and ensuring the victory of socialism and lasting peace.

Then, on August 20, 1918, the proletarian revolution was confined to Russia, and "Soviet government," that is, the investment of the *entire* power of state in the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, still seemed (and was for that matter) only a Russian institution.

Now, on January 12, 1919, we are witnessing a mighty "Soviet" movement not only in the parts of the former tsarist empire, as, for example, in Latvia, Poland and the Ukraine, but also in the West-European countries, both in the neutral countries (Switzerland, Holland, Norway) and in those which have suffered from the war (Austria, Germany). The revolution in Germany-which is particularly important and significant in this country, one of the most advanced of the capitalist countries-at once assumed "Soviet" forms. The whole course of development of the German revolution, and especially the struggle of the "Spartacists"—that is, of the genuine and only representatives of the proletariat-against the alliance of the traitorous swine, the Scheidemanns and Sudekums, with the bourgeoisie, has clearly shown how the question in relation to Germany has been put by history: either "Soviet government" or a bourgeois parliament, whatever labels (such as a "National" or "Constituent" Assembly) it may bear.

That is the way the question has been put by world history. That can now be said without any fear of exaggeration.

"Soviet government" is the second world-historical step, or stage, in the development of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The first step was the Paris Commune. The brilliant analysis of the nature and significance of the Commune made by Marx in his Civil War in France showed that the Commune had created a state of a new type, a proletarian state. Every state, including the most democratic republic, is nothing but a machine for the suppression of one class by another. The proletarian state is a machine for the suppression of the bourgeoisie by the proletariat, which is essential owing to the frantic, desperate and ferocious resistance which the landlords and capitalists, the entire bourgeoisie and its hangers-on, all the exploiters, put up when their overthrow, the expropriation of the expropriators, begins.

The bourgeois parliament, however democratic and in however democratic a republic—is nothing but a machine for the suppression of millions of working people by a handful of exploiters—if the property and power of the capitalists is preserved. The Socialists, the

fighters for the liberation of the working people from exploitation, had to use the bourgeois parliaments as a platform, as one of their bases of propaganda, agitation and organisation, as long as our struggle was confined within the framework of the bourgeois system. But now that world history has placed on the order of the day the complete destruction of this system, the overthrow and suppression of the exploiters, and the transition from capitalism to socialism, to confine oneself to bourgeois parliamentarism and to bourgeois democracy, to paint it up as "democracy" in general, to gloss over its bourgeois character, and to forget that universal suffrage, as long as the capitalists retain their property, is only one of the weapons of the bourgeois state, is shamefully to betray the proletariat, desert to the side of its class enemy, the bourgeoisie, become a traitor and renegade.

The three trends in the world socialist movement to which the Bolshevik press has been constantly pointing ever since 1915 now stand out clearer than ever in the light of the bloody struggle and civil war in Germany.

Karl Liebknecht is a name known to the workers of all countries. Everywhere, and especially in the Entente countries, it is a symbol of the loyalty of a leader to the interests of the proletariat, of loyalty to the socialist revolution. It is the symbol of a really sincere, really self-sacrificing and relentless struggle against capitalism. It is a symbol of uncompromising struggle against imperialism in actual fact, and not only in word, a self-sacrificing struggle at a time when one's "own" country is intoxicated with the fumes of imperialist victories. On the side of Liebknecht and the "Spartacists" stand all who are honest and really revolutionary among the Socialists of Germany, all the best and most convinced among the proletariat, the entire mass of the exploited, seething with indignation and filled with a readiness for revolution.

Opposed to Liebknecht stand the Scheidemanns, the Sudekums and that whole gang of contemptible lackeys of the Kaiser and the bourgeoisie. They are traitors to socialism just like the Gomperses and Victor Bergers, the Hendersons and Webbs, the Renaudels and Vanderveldes. They represent that upper stratum of the workers corrupted by the bourgeoisie, whom we Bolsheviks (speaking of the Russian Sudekums, the Mensheviks) used to call "bourgeois agents in the working-class movement," and for whom the best of the American Socialists have found the remarkably pithy and extremely apt title of "labour lieutenants of the capitalist class." They are representatives

of the modern type of socialist treachery, for in all civilised and advanced countries, the bourgeoisie—whether by colonial oppression or by the financial extortion of "benefits" from weak, although formally independent nations—robs a population many times the number of the population of its "own" country. This is what gives the imperialist bourgeoisie the economic opportunity of making "super-profits" and of employing a portion of these super-profits to bribe a certain upper stratum of the proletariat and convert it into a reformist, opportunist petty bourgeoisie that is terrified of revolution.

Between the Spartacists and the Scheidemannites stand the vacillating and spineless "Kautskians," those who share Kautsky's views, who are ostensibly "independent," but actually are entirely and completely dependent on the bourgeoisie and the Scheidemannites one day, and on the Spartacists another, following now the former, now the latter—people without ideas, character, policy, honour or conscience, living personifications of the confusion of mind of the philistines, who pay lip service to the socialist revolution, but actually are incapable of understanding it now that it has begun, and who, like the renegades they are, advocate "democracy" in general, which actually means advocating bourgeois democracy.

In every capitalist country, every intelligent worker will, in the modified situation determined by the special national and historical conditions, always recognise these three basic trends both among the Socialists and among the Syndicalists; for the imperialist war and the beginning of the world proletarian revolution give rise to identical ideological and political currents all over the world.

The above lines were written before the vile and brutal murder of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg by the Ebert and Scheidemann government. These butchers, in their servility to the bourgeoisie, allowed the German White Guards, the watchdogs of sacred capitalist property, to lynch Rosa Luxemburg and to murder Karl Liebknecht by shooting him in the back, on the obviously lying pretext that he was "attempting to escape" (Russian tsardom, when it was engaged in drowning the 1905 Revolution in blood, often committed similar murders of prisoners on the similar lying pretext that they were "attempting to escape"). And at the same time these butchers shielded the White Guards with the authority of a government supposedly in no way implicated and supposedly standing above all classes! No

words can describe the utter vileness and baseness of this butchery committed by men who are supposed to be Socialists. History, apparently, has chosen a path in which the "labour lieutenants of the capitalist class" have to play their role to the "utter limit" of brutality, vileness and despicableness. The Kautskian fools may talk in their newspaper, the Freiheit, [Freedom] \* about a "court" of representatives of "all" the "Socialist" parties (these crawling lackeys still call the Scheidemann butchers Socialists)! These prize specimens of philistine stupidity and petty-bourgeois cowardice do not even understand that courts are organs of state power, and that the struggle and civil war in Germany is being fought precisely to determine in whose hands this power is to be: in those of the bourgeoisie, "served" by the Scheidemanns as butchers and assassins and by the Kautskys as eulogisers of "pure democracy," or in those of the proletariat, which will overthrow the capitalist exploiters and crush their resistance.

The blood of the finest members of the world proletarian International, of the never-to-be-forgotten leaders of the international socialist revolution will serve to steel larger and larger numbers of workers for a struggle of life and death. And that struggle will end in victory. We in Russia, in the summer of 1917, had our "July days," when the Russian Scheidemanns—the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries—also used the "authority of the state" as a mask for the "victory" of the White Guards over the Bolsheviks, and when in the streets of Petrograd Cossacks lynched the worker Voinov for distributing Bolshevik leaflets. We know from experience how rapidly such "victories" of the bourgeoise and its lackeys cure the masses of illusions of bourgeois democracy, "universal suffrage," and the like.

A certain vacillation is now to be observed among the bourgeoisie and the governments of the Entente. Some of them realise that the demoralisation of the Allied troops in Russia, who are helping the White Guards and serving the interests of the blackest monarchist and landlord reactionaries, is already beginning, and that the continuation of military intervention and the attempts to vanquish Russia, which will necessitate a million-strong army of occupation for a long time to come, is the surest and quickest way to spread the proletarian revolution to the Entente countries. The example of the German army of occupation in the Ukraine has been quite convincing.

Official organ of the German Independent Socialist Party, published from November, 1918, to October, 1922.—Ed

Another section of the bourgeoisie in the Entente countries continue to advocate military intervention in Russia and the "economic encirclement" (Clemenceau) and strangulation of the Soviet Republic. The entire press in the service of this bourgeoisie, i.e., the majority of the daily newspapers of Great Britain and France in the pay of the capitalists, are prophesying the early collapse of the Soviet regime, drawing lurid pictures of the horrors of famine in Russia, and lying about "disorders" and the "instability" of the Soviet government. The troops of the White Guards, the landlords and capitalists, which the Entente is supplying with officers, munitions, money and auxiliary units, have cut off the hungry centre and north of Russia from the richest grain regions—Siberia and the Don.

The sufferings of the starving workers of Petrograd, Moscow, Ivanovo-Voznesensk and other non-agricultural centres are indeed severe. The workers could never bear such hardships, such agonies of hunger as those to which they have been condemned by the military intervention of the Entente (an intervention often camouflaged by hypocritical promises not to send "their" troops, while they continue to send "coloured" troops, as well as munitions, money and officers), if they did not realise that they are defending the cause of socialism in Russia and all over the world.

"Allied" and White Guard troops hold Archangel, Perm, Orenburg, Rostov-on-Don, Baku and Askhabad, but the "Soviet movement" has won Riga and Kharkov. Latvia and the Ukraine are becoming Soviet republics. The workers see that the great sacrifices they are bearing are not in vain, that the victory of Soviet government is advancing and spreading, growing and strengthening all over the world. Every month of severe struggle and heavy sacrifice serves to strengthen the cause of Soviet government throughout the world and to weaken its enemies, the exploiters.

The exploiters are still strong enough to murder and lynch the finest leaders of the world proletarian revolution, and to multiply the sacrifices and sufferings of the workers in the countries and regions they occupy or conquer. But the exploiters of the whole world will not be strong enough to halt the victory of the world proletarian revolution, which will liberate mankind from the yoke of capital, from the eternal menace of new imperialist wars, which under capitalism are inevitable.

## EVERYBODY ON FOOD AND TRANSPORT WORK!

I HAVE already had occasion at the last session of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee \* to point out that the half-year which has just begun will be a particularly difficult one for the Soviet Republic. During the first half-year of 1918 we procured 28,000,000 poods of grain, and during the second half-year 67,000,000 poods. The first half-year of 1919 will be more difficult than the preceding one.

The food shortage is growing more and more acute. Typhus is becoming an extremely serious menace. Heroic efforts are required; but what we are doing is far from enough. Can the situation be saved?

Undoubtedly. The capture of Ufa and Orenburg, our victories in the South and the success of the Soviet uprising in the Ukraine open up the most favourable prospects. We are now in a position to procure far more grain than is required for a semi-starvation food ration.

Millions of poods of grain have already been delivered in the East. They are being held up by the bad state of the transport system. In the South, the liberation of the entire province of Voronezh and part of the Don Region from Krasnov's Cossacks makes it fully possible to procure considerable quantities of grain, over and above our previous calculations. Finally, the grain surplus in the Ukraine is veritably enormous, and the Soviet government of the Ukraine is offering to help us. Not only can we now avoid famine, but we can even feed the starved population of non-agricultural Russia to satiety.

The whole trouble lies in the bad state of the transport system and the great shortage of food workers.

Every effort must be made, we must arouse the energies of the working class masses. We must definitely get out of the customary everyday rut of life and work. We must pull ourselves together! We must set about the revolutionary mobilisation of people for food and

<sup>\*</sup> See pages 483-95 in this volume.—Ed.

transport work. We must not confine ourselves to "current" work, but go beyond its bounds and discover new methods of securing additional forces.

On the most "cautious" and even pessimistic estimate, we now have very weighty grounds for believing that a victory over famine and typhus in this half-year (and such a victory is entirely feasible) will lead to a radical improvement in the whole economic situation, for the establishment of contact with the Ukraine and Tashkent removes the main and basic causes of the shortage and dearth of raw materials.

Of course, the hungry masses are fatigued, and that fatigue at times is more than human strength can endure. But there is a way out, and a new accession of energy is undoubtedly possible, all the more since the growth of the proletarian revolution all over the world is becoming increasingly apparent and promises a radical improvement in our foreign as well as our home affairs.

We must pull ourselves together. Every party organisation, every trade union, every group of organised workers, and even workers who are not organised but are anxious to "wrestle" with the famine—every group of Soviet workers and citizens generally must ask themselves the following questions: What can we do to extend and intensify the national crusade against the famine?

Can we not replace male labour by female labour and thus release increasing numbers of men for the difficult duties of transport and food work? Can we not provide commissars for the locomotive and car repair shops? Can we not provide rank-and-file workers for the food army?

Should we not assign every tenth or every fifth man from our midst, from our group, from our factory, etc., to the food army, or for more than usually difficult and arduous work in the railway shops?

Are not some of us engaged in Soviet or other work which might be relaxed or even suspended altogether without endangering the root foundations of the state? Is it not our duty to mobilise such workers immediately for food and transport work?

Let us rise in ever larger masses and deal one more blow at that accursed maxim of the old capitalist society, a maxim which we have inherited from that society and which infects and perverts every one of us in one degree or another, the maxim "each for himself, and the devil take the hindmost." It is this heritage from predatory, sordid and bloody capitalism that is stifling us, crushing us, oppressing, ruin-

ing and killing us more than anything else. We cannot rid ourselves of this heritage all at once; it must be fought incessantly; more than one crusade will have to be declared and conducted against it.

To save the millions and tens of millions from famine and typhus is possible. Salvation is at hand. The crisis of famine and typhus can be vanquished, and vanquished completely. It would be childish, foolish, shameful to give way to despair. To run off one by one, every man for himself, and each as he knows best, only somehow to "get out of the fix" oneself, to shove back the more feeble and push forward alone, would be to desert, to abandon the sick and exhausted comrades and to make the general situation still worse.

We have created the firm foundation of a Red Army, which has now forced its way through incredible difficulties, through the iron wall of the armies of the landlords and capitalists supported by the Anglo-French billionaires, forced its way through to the principal sources of raw materials, to grain, cotton and coal. We created that foundation by working in a new way, by political propaganda at the front, by organising the Communists in our army, by the self-sacrificing organisation and struggle of the best of the working class masses.

We have gained a number of successes both on the external, the military front and on the home front, in the fight against the exploiters, against sabotage, and for the difficult, arduous, thorny but correct path of socialist construction. We are on the verge of a complete and decisive victory on both a Russian and international scale.

A little more effort, and we shall escape from the tenacious clutch of famine.

What we have done and are doing for the Red Army we must also do, and with redoubled energies, for the invigoration, extension and intensification of food and transport work. All our best workers must engage in this work. A place will be found for everybody who is anxious and able to work; everybody who wishes can help to achieve an organised and mass victory over disruption and famine; every active force, every ability, every speciality, every profession, every responsible individual can find and must be found employment in this peace army of food and transport workers—a peace army which, in order to achieve complete success, must now support the Red Army and consolidate and take advantage of its successes.

Everybody on food and transport work!

January 26, 1919.

Pravda, No. 19, January 28, 1919.

#### REPLY TO THE QUESTION OF A PEASANT

THE Izvestia of the Central Executive Committee of February 2 contained a letter from a peasant, G. Gulov, in which he asks about the policy of our workers' and peasants' government towards the middle peasant, and says that rumours are being circulated to the effect that Lenin and Trotsky are at loggerheads, that there are serious differences between them over this very question of the middle peasant.

Comrade Trotsky has already replied to this in his "Letter to the Middle Peasants" which appeared in the Izvestia of the Central Executive Committee of February 7. He says there that the rumours of differences between him and me are a monstrous and unscrupulous lie, circulated by the landlords and capitalists or by their witting and unwitting tools. I, for my part, fully endorse Comrade Trotsky's statement. There are no differences between us, and in relation to the middle peasants, there are no differences not only between Trotsky and myself, but generally in the Communist Party to which we both belong.

In his letter, Comrade Trotsky explains clearly and at length why the Communist Party and the present workers' and peasants' government, which has been elected by the Soviets and whose members belong to that party, do not consider the middle peasants their enemies. I wholeheartedly endorse what Comrade Trotsky has said.

There is not a single decree (law), not a single decision of the Soviet government that does not draw a distinction between the three chief groups of peasants. The first group is the poor peasants (the proletarians and semi-proletarians as they are usually called in economic science). They are very numerous. Under the rule of the landlords and capitalists, the whole weight of their oppression fell chiefly on the poor peasants. In every country of the world the strongest buttress of the genuine socialist movement is the workers and the poor peasants who support them. The second group is the kulaks,

that is, the rich peasants, who batten on the labour of others, either by hiring labourers or by lending out money at interest, and the like. This group works hand in glove with the landlords and capitalists, the enemies of the Soviet government. The third group is the middle peasants. These are not enemies of the Soviet government. They can be its friends, and that is what we are working for and will achieve. All teachers of socialism have always maintained that in order to establish socialism, the workers must overthrow the landlords and capitalists, but that agreement with the middle peasants is both possible and essential.

Under the rule of the landlords and capitalists, only a very few of the middle peasants, perhaps one in a hundred, managed to attain a state of lasting prosperity, and that only by becoming kulaks themselves and climbing onto the backs of the poor. As for the vast majority of the middle peasants, under the rule of the landlords and capitalists they must inevitably suffer want and humiliation at the hands of the rich. That is how things are in every capitalist country.

Under socialism, a state of complete and lasting prosperity is possible both for all workers and for all middle peasants to a man, without any robbing of the labour of others. No Bolshevik, no Communist, no intelligent Socialist has ever even thought of using force against the middle peasants. All Socialists have always spoken of the need for agreement with them, and of the middle peasants gradually and voluntarily coming over to socialism.

Our country has been devastated more than any other by the four years of the capitalists' criminal war. There is chaos and disruption everywhere; there are no goods to be had, and the towns and the non-agricultural provinces are afflicted with frightful and agonising famine. We are bending all our energies to put an end to the disruption and the famine and to defeat the armies of the landlords and capitalists, who are striving to restore the old rule of the tsar and of the rich, of the exploiters. In the South, both in the Don Region and in the Ukraine, the White Guards have been vanquished, and the road to fuel (coal) and grain is being cleared. One last effort, and we shall save ourselves from famine. But the disruption caused by the war is immense, and only prolonged and self-sacrificing effort on the part of all the working people is capable of leading our country into the path of lasting prosperity.

Of the complaints we hear from the middle peasants, two kinds

should be noted. Firstly, complaints of excessive "domineering," of undemocratic, and at times positively outrageous, conduct on the part of local authorities, especially in remote districts. Undoubtedly, in the country districts it is more difficult to establish proper control and supervision over the local authorities, and sometimes bad and unscrupulous elements worm their way into the Communist ranks. A ruthless struggle must be waged against such people, who, in defiance of the laws of the Soviet government, treat the peasants unjustly; they must be immediately removed from their posts and stern justice meted out to them. Every effort is being made by the honest workers and peasants to rid Russia of such "scions" of landlord and capitalist life, who dare to "domineer," when, according to the laws of our workers' and peasants' republic, they should, as elected representatives of the Soviets, set an example in conscientiousness and strict observance of the laws. The Soviet government has already shot many such an official caught taking bribes and the struggle against such scoundrels will be fought to the end.

The other kind of complaint refers to the requisitioning of grain and the strict prohibition of free trading in grain. Our government is implacable in its fight against high-handedness and infractions of the law. But can we sanction freedom of trade in grain? In view of the devastated state of the country, grain is not to be had, or is very short, and, what is more, the railways have been so damaged by the war that transportation is going very badly.

In view of the shortage of grain, freedom of trade in that commodity would result in frantic profiteering and the forcing up of prices to hundreds of rubles per pood; for a hungry man will give all he has for a piece of bread. Freedom of trade in grain in a starving country would mean frantic profits for the kulaks, for the unscrupulous rich peasants who line their pockets on the need and starvation of the people. Freedom of trade in grain in a starving country would mean the victory of the rich over the poor, for the rich would buy bread however extortionate the price, whereas the poor would be left empty-handed. Freedom of trade in grain would mean freedom for the rich to grow richer and for the poor to die. Freedom of trade in grain would mean a reversion to the rule and omnipotence of the capitalists.

No. We refuse to revert, and will not revert, to the rule of the capitalists, to the rule of money, to freedom of profit-making. We want to go forward to socialism, to the proper distribution of food

among all the working people. All grain surpluses must be surrendered at a fair price to the Soviet state, and the state must distribute them equally among the working people. That cannot be achieved all at once; to establish such a just, socialist system is no easy matter. It will require much effort, much labour, and strict comradely discipline on the part of the workers and peasants to root out the old, capitalist fredom of trade, freedom of profit-making, freedom of throat-cutting, freedom of oppression, which has drenched the earth in blood.

But this difficult task is now being tackled by millions and millions of workers and peasants. Every honest and conscientious peasant and worker has grasped the meaning of socialism and is staunchly fighting for it.

All over the world the socialist revolution is spreading. The rule of the capitalists and "freedom of trade" will never return. Socialism will win.

February 14, 1919.

Pravda, No. 35, February 15, 1919.

### DRAFT OF AGREEMENT WITH WILLIAM BULLITT\*

- 1. ALL existing de facto governments in Russia and Finland are to remain in control of territories in their possession, except as the conference may direct, until the peoples inhabiting the territories controlled by the de facto governments shall themselves determine to change their governments. There is to be a complete mutual agreement not to use force to upset any of these governments including Finland, Poland, Galicia, Rumania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Afghanistan.
- 2. The economic blockade is to be raised and mutual trade relations are to be re-established.
- 3. The Soviet government is to be allowed unhindered transit on all railways and the use of all ports which belonged to the former Russian Empire and to Finland.
- 4. The citizens of the countries involved are to have the reciprocal right of free entry, of sojourn, of circulation, and of full security, provided they do not interfere in the domestic politics of other countries. There is to be reciprocal right to send official representatives, who are not necessarily to be full diplomatic officials but who are to enjoy rights of immunity.
- 5. There is to be a general amnesty to all political opponents, offenders, and prisoners in Russia and for all such who have been or may be prosecuted outside of Russia for giving help to Soviet Russia. All prisoners of war are to be repatriated.
- 6. Immediately after the signing of this agreement, all foreign troops are to be withdrawn from Russia and all military assistance to anti-Soviet governments is to cease. All armies left in Russia are to be proportionally reduced to a peace footing.
- 7. The governments in Russia and Finland shall recognise their responsibility for the financial obligations of the former Empire, to

foreign states parties to this agreement and to the nationals of such states. Other provisions in this project are subordinate to these main principles.

Written in February 1919.

Published in The Foreign Policies of Soviet Russia, by Alfred L. P. Dennis, Dutton & Co., New York, 1920.

#### EXPLANATORY NOTES

1. Lenin's report on foreign policy at the joint meeting of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and the Moscow Soviet called forth furious attacks from the Mensheviks and the "Left" and Right Socialist-Revolutionaries. They demanded the denunciation of the Brest-Litovsk Peace, the summoning of the Constituent Assembly, and the abolition of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The reply to these attacks was made by Jacob Sverdlov, Chairman of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee. The resolutions submitted by the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries were rejected by an overwhelming majority and the Bolshevik resolution adopted, which endorsed the policy of the Soviet government and called for greater efforts in building up the Red Army and consolidating the dictatorship of the proletariat.

- 2. Lenin is referring to Engels' preface to Borkheim's Zur Erinnerung für die deutschen Mordspatrioten, 1806-1807 (In Memory of the German Arch-Patriots, 1806-1807). A quotation from this preface, which was written in 1887, will be found on pages 119-20 of this volume.
- 3. The First All-Russian Congress of Internationalist Teachers met June 2-6, 1918, and represented groups of revolutionary teachers who were in favor of the Soviet regime, as against the Teachers' Union, which pursued a policy of sabotaging the measures of the Soviet government.
- 4. The Czechoslovak revolt (May, 1918), was a counter-revolutionary uprising against the Soviet government of the Czechoslovak corps of former prisoners of war in Russia, instigated by the British and French imperialists and actively supported by the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks.
- 5. Lenin is referring to the small groups of workers who in the early days of the Revolution, influenced by the Mensheviks and Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, were opposed to the Soviet system. Especially active in this respect was the Printing Workers' Union, which was under Menshevik leadership.

- 6. Golos Trudovovo Krestyanstva (Voice of the Working Peasant), founded at the end of November, 1917, in Petrograd and originally the organ of the Executive Committee of the All-Russian Soviet of Peasants' Deputies, became, on January 20, 1918, the organ of the Peasant Section of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee. At that time the paper was under the control of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, but on July 10, 1918, after the suppression of the Left Socialist-Revolutionary revolt, it was converted into the organ of the People's Commissariat of Agriculture.
- 7. The Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic, in the drafting of which Lenin and Stalin participated, was adopted by the Fifth All-Russian Congress of Soviets on July 10, 1918.
- 8. The Fifth Congress of Soviets met in Moscow from July 4 to 10, 1918. It was suspended for two days (July 6 and 7) owing to the "Left" Socialist-Revolutionaries' revolt against the Soviet government.
- 9. Having heard Lenin's statement, the All-Russian Central Executive Committee adopted the following resolution: "The Central Executive Committee fully endorses the statement of the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars and resolves that it shall be given broad publicity among the labouring masses."
- 10. The quotation is from Frederick Engels' letter to Bebel of March 18-28, 1875, The Correspondence of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, p. 337.\*
- 11. Karl Marx, Letters to Dr. Kugelmann, letter of December 13, 1870, p. 116.
- 12. Frederick Engels, Herr Eugen Dühring's Revolution in Science (Anti-Dühring), p. 203.
- 13. Lenin is referring to the Congress of the French Socialist Party held in Paris, October 6-11, 1918, at which a resolution was adopted condemning the intervention of the Entente Powers in Soviet Russia.
- 14. The quotation is from Engels' article, "The Peasant Question in France and Germany."
- 15. See Karl Marx, The Civil War in France, p. 42.
- 16. The reference is to Engels' letter to Sorge of November 29, 1886, Correspondence of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, p. 450, in which he says that
- All English translations of the writings of Marx and Engels quoted in the text refer to editions of International Publishers, New York.—Ed.

for the German Marxists in America theory "is a credo and not a guide to action."

- 17. The quotation is taken from Karl Marx, Critique of the Gotha Programme, p. 18.
- 18. The quotation is from Engels' letter to Bebel of March 18-28, 1875, Correspondence of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, p. 336.
- 19. See Frederick Engels' introduction to Karl Marx, The Civil War in France, pp. 15-16.
- 20. The quotation is from Engels' article, "On Authority."
- 21. See Karl Marx, The Civil War in France, p. 37: "... The working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery, and wield it for its own purposes."
- 22. See Frederick Engels, The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State, p. 157.
- 23. The Correspondence of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, p. 337.
- 24. The quotation is from Frederick Engels' introduction to Karl Marx, The Civil War in France, p. 19.
- 25. See Frederick Engels, The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State, p. 158.
- 26. Karl Marx, Selected Works, Vol. II, pp. 498, 500-01.
- 27. The quotation is from an article by Karl Marx on "Political Indifference."
- 28. See Frederick Engels' introduction to Karl Marx, The Civil War in France, pp. 18-19.
- 29. The Correspondence of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, p. 336.
- 30. The representatives of the Right Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties were expelled from the Soviets on June 14, 1918, by decision of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee in consequence of the counter-revolutionary and anti-Soviet activities of these parties.

- 31. Lieberdans—an ironical nickname for the Mensheviks, used in the Bolshevik press in 1917 and 1918; a combination of the names of two Menshevik leaders, Mark Lieber and Theodore Dan.
- 32. The "activists"—a group of Mensheviks who resorted to armed action against the Soviet regime.
- 33. See Frederick Engels' introduction to Karl Marx, The Civil War in France, p. 9.
- 34. See Karl Marx, The Civil War in France, p. 40.
- 35. The reference is to Marx's article, "The Bourgeoisie and Counter-Revolution."
- 36. See Karl Marx, Letters to Dr. Kugelmann, p. 123.
- 37. The treacherous action of M. Muravyev, former officer of the General Staff, Commander-in-Chief of the Soviet forces operating against the Czechoslovak Corps in Eastern Russia, was timed to coincide with the revolt of the "Left" Socialist-Revolutionaries against the Soviet government in Moscow. In order to support the revolt, he gave orders to "turn back all troop trains moving eastward and advance along the Volga," the purpose being to seize Moscow. The plan, however, failed, for the masses would not support it, and the troops on whom Muravyev relied refused to follow him.
- 38. Lenin is referring to a bill, initiated by the Socialist-Revolutionaries, providing that all agricultural land be placed under the jurisdiction of Land Committees. It was introduced in the Provisional Government by S. Maslov, Minister of Agriculture, a few days before the October Revolution, and never became law.
- 39. Karl Marx, Theories of Surplus Value, German ed.
- 40. The Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies that arose in Germany during the bourgeois revolution of November, 1918, became "an obedient tool of the bourgeois parliament, for they were dominated by the Social-Democrats, who were compromisers of the type of the Russian Mensheviks." (History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, p. 231.)
- 41. The Third Congress of Workers' Cooperative Societies met December 7-11, 1918, and discussed chiefly measures for establishing close contact with the Soviet government. This was being hampered by the Mensheviks and other petty-bourgeois elements, who were working against the Soviet government under the

pretence of defending the "independence" of the workers' cooperative societies. The two contending parties at the congress were the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks, the Bolshevik view winning all along the line.

- 42. Lenin is referring to the temporary abandonment of hostility for neutrality towards the Soviet government on the part of a section of the petty-bourgeois Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary parties under the influence of the progress made by the Soviets and by the revolution in Western Europe.
- 43. The First Congress of Land Departments, Committees of Poor Peasants and Communes met in Moscow December 11-20, 1918. It reviewed the work of the Committees of Poor Peasants and outlined a course of development from small individual farming to the social cultivation of the land.
- 44. The "Rough Draft" was preceded by the following note by Lenin: "Please read this draft, which I intend to submit to the Council of Defence, show it to the others and discuss it by Saturday, December 14. Any amendments there may be should be handed in in written form by Saturday." Then followed a list of persons to whom the draft was to be sent, including Stalin and Sverdlov.
- 45. See Karl Marx, The Class Struggles in France, 1848-1850, p. 120.
- 46. The reference is to the decision of the Moscow Soviet on August 24, 1918, and of the Petrograd Soviet on September 5, 1918, to permit the working population to bring into the city one and a half poods (54 lbs.) of food per person, as an exemption from the government grain monopoly. This measure was taken in view of the drastic food shortage in these cities.
- 47. The Moscow City Conference of the Russian Communist Party, held on January 18, 1919, discussed chiefly proposals submitted by several members of the Moscow Soviet radically to revise the Constitution of the R.S.F.S.R. and to alter the relations between centre and districts and between the Communist groups in the Soviets and the party committees.
- 48. See Frederick Engels' introduction to Karl Marx, The Class Struggles in France, 1848-1850, p. 25.
- 49. This agreement, drafted by Lenin, contained the official proposals of the Soviet government, and was handed to William Bullitt, who had been sent to Moscow in 1919 by President Woodrow Wilson to ascertain from the Soviet government the terms on which it would be prepared to conclude peace with the Allies and with the White Guard governments existing on the territory of former tsarist Russia. Nothing came of these negotiations as the terms of peace proposed by the Soviet government were rejected by the Allies.

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